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**THE  
Spirit of Buddhism**



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## THE SPIRIT OF BUDDHISM

Being an Examination-Analytical  
Explanatory and Critical.

The life of the founder of Buddhism: His religion and philosophy, its influence upon other religion, philosophies and on the ancient and modern social and ethical systems, social upheavals and revolutionary movements.

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**Pages of this volume are in continuation  
to the previous volume.**

## CHAPTER XII

### THE DOCTRINE OF BUDDHISM.

#### *God or No-God.*

Buddhism is not a science, nor philosophy ; nor indeed was it taught as a religion. It was originally conceived and imparted to, as an ethical principle for the purification of the mind, though it has since developed into a religion and a philosophy. Even as an exegesis of ethics it was, as given, neither logical in its method nor scientific in its arrangement ; since the Master had never to expound his system as if in a class-room, nor did he intend that it should be collected into a treatise, or indeed, be at all available for a systematic study. His teachings suffer on that account. They are all disjointed, and in places contradictory ; nor have all the subjects to which his teachings extend received proportionate, and, in some, at all an adequate treatment. His glossators have suffered from this disproportionate handling of the subjects. And on that account Buddhism has been much misunderstood even by those who approach it with sympathy.

In order to understand Buddhism aright, we have to re-arrange its subjects and collect in one place all the scattered references to them in the scriptures. These, again, follow a fortuitous course. The European scholar who reads Buddhism finds it a jumble of confused ideas which he sets down with scorn ; but even those who have made it a subject of their special study have at times to turn away from it with a feeling of disgust ; witness, for example, M. Saint Hilaire's comments on Buddhism. " But it is time to close these lengthy considerations on Buddhism. We will now summarize these criticisms by applying them to some fundamental theories.

" Transmigration, which is the starting point of all his doctrine, is but an indefensible hypothesis, which Buddh

doubtless did not invent, but which he accepted, and from which he drew the most deplorable conclusions.

“ His ethics are incomplete and fruitless, inasmuch as they repose on a thoroughly false idea of the nature of man, and of the life he leads here below.

“ Nirvan, or annihilation is a monstrous conception, repugnant to all the instincts of human nature, revolting to reason, and implying atheism.

“ Reduced to these terms, Buddhism ought to inspire more pity than contempt ; yet it has reigned for many centuries, and it still reigns over a multitude of races, offering to their credulity the melancholy doctrines we have just viewed, as sole nourishment of their faith, which is all the more ardent, the more absurd it is. By the idea of transmigration, it plunges them into a fantastic world which prevents their understanding the real conditions of the one they live in. Moreover, his ethics, which were unable to save men, were even less fitted to constitute any equitable or intelligent societies. His doctrine of Nirvan degraded man lower than the brutes, which have at least this advantage over him, that they do not defy annihilation, which they do not dream of. In one word, he has totally failed to recognise either nature, duty, or personal dignity. He aimed at delivering humanity, but only destroyed it ; he wished to enlighten it, and has cast it into the deepest gloom. His intentions may have been noble, but his general action, with some few exceptions, has been fatal ; and it may be justly doubted, if the nations he has lost will ever find, or even accept, any remedy for the evil he has done them, and will continue to do for many a day.” (1)

Other scholars have used similar, and scarcely any more guarded language—not that such language is wholly unwarranted by the language which Buddha is reported to have used in his discursive discourses to his disciples. But is it right to lay undue emphasis upon one discourse, overlooking the trend of others bearing on the same subject ? The fact

(1) St. Hilaire “ *The Buddha and his Religion* ” 171, 175.

is that Buddhism has suffered from its discursive teachings and Buddha himself—a religious teacher and neither a logician nor a synthetic philosopher—cannot be acquitted of all blame in giving occasion for the misunderstanding arising from his laying undue emphasis upon the point he was immediately concerned with, overlooking its effect upon other points closely associated with the subject of his immediate teaching.

In a vast conglomerate system, in which metaphysical problems are inextricably bound up with those of sociological ethics, a certain amount of discrepancy is natural, and indeed, inevitable. No teaching of Christianity, indeed, of any other religion can escape that fate. But if we wish to approach the question with a close analytical mind and eliminate from our discussion all that is otiose and even contradictory, being the outcome of the exigency of the moment, inserted by the devout zeal of the disciples, we shall find sufficient materials in the scattered scriptures to construct a system which was the pith and marrow of the Buddhist doctrine and which alone the great teacher intended to treat as the cardinal lessons of his doctrine.

A critical examination of Buddhism must then proceed upon analysis of the scriptures taken as a whole. It must take note of what were the fundamentals of his doctrine and how far they are modified or shaken by the casual references which militate with them. It is not re-construction of the system, nor, indeed, is it garbling. It is the presentment of a case with all its strength and all its drawbacks thrown into an impartial perspective. But to attain that end, there must be no over-touching of the light and shade. There must be, indeed, no touching at all. All that is needed is the re-arrangement of the focus and its adjustment to the central figure, overlooking all its trappings and drapery. An attempt is here made to re-state the Buddhist doctrine from this stand-point.

The first question that has aroused acutest controversy in regard to Buddhism is its view upon God. It has been roundly accused of atheism. It has been denounced as a religion



which has no God at one end and no soul at the other—a religion which drives man to suicide and hurls the suicide into everlasting annihilation. It is, therefore, necessary to examine how far these strictures are justifiable, and how far Buddhism has popularized the cult of atheism. But here, unfortunately, we are confronted with a difficulty, the statement of which yields a solution to the question. What do we understand by the term God—and what do we mean or imply by it? For, that word, though the basis of most religions, is never understood in the same sense by any two religions; nor indeed is it used in the same sense by any two sects of the same religion. It is, however, clear in what sense the philosopher understands it. He uses it in the sense of the first cause, the *causa causans*, the ultimate cause and creator of the universe.

But here again, the philosopher is confronted with a difficulty. For when he uses the words, he is not always conscious of the elasticity of their meaning; since the ultimate cause that produces a phenomenon need not necessarily be single and isolated. Take an instance: Water is produced by two elements—Hydrogen and Oxygen. These two combined, produce water. In fact, they do not produce it, but the moment they are combined, the product is water. What is then the cause of water? Hydrogen or Oxygen, or the combination of the two, or all the three taken together? Similar difficulties surround philosophic thought; and it is responsible for the unsatisfactory solutions which the scientist as well as the philosopher has to offer on the subject of the ultimate cause of the universe.

The fact is that with our limited intelligence, we cannot conceive of the unlimited universe, nor do we know enough of it to be able to assert with any degree of confidence, how it came into being and who created it. No human ratiocination can carry us beyond a stage where human intellect staggers and the search for further knowledge becomes a vain aspiration. But though knowledge fails, the thirst for knowledge

remains ; and it is partially or wholly satisfied according to the credulity of the person desiring to quench it.

Human ratiocination then ends in agnosticism, not atheism. The older philosophers made no such distinction. To them, as to those whose judgment is warped by religious prejudice, the two terms are inter-changeable and synonymous. But there is a world of difference between the two,—as much difference as there can be between ignorance and knowledge ; between a negative and a positive assertion. Now ignorance of the ultimate cause may proceed not only from ignorance of the unknown, but from knowledge of the limits of human reason. These two factors might operate at the same time ; but they do not necessarily do so ; since the bounds of human knowledge, though closed to human reason, are always open to human credulity and it accounts for the diversity of religious faiths. Buddh might have extended such bounds, by professing to reveal to man knowledge which he did not possess. Such revelations have been made by other Teachers. But what are their credentials ? Nothing beyond their own *ipse dixit* and a blind faith in their assertions. That such assertions do not always suffice to convince even the masses—is proved by the fact that resort is often had to miracles, as offering better credentials of the miracle-workers.

These are unfortunately facts which he who runs can see ; but people intoxicated by religious fervour refuse to see them. They argue to themselves and try to convince others that there is such a thing as Divine Revelation and that God does send down His emissaries from time to time to announce His existence and establish a *nexus* between Him and Man. But when we ask for his credentials, what have we got beyond his own word and some legerdemain practised or imputed to establish the *bona fides* of his claim ? But one asks—if the messenger of the High has come to awaken man, why cannot he produce better credentials and why does not the High come down Himself to announce Himself to the world and so put an end to all false religions and religious strife ? Such advents have often been promised but they have never been realised.

The fact is that the belief in God is only the sublimated form of a belief in the Devil. Both beliefs were the outcome of fear and many men now believe in the one as much as in the other, merely because they have been taught to do so from early life; and it may be that such beliefs through the course of numerous generations may have engendered an imposing atavism favourable to the illusion. The ministers of the gospel take good care to instil into the mind of the young their ideas of God and the Devil. These ideas become rooted in the mind and are often impervious to the voice of reason. But once we begin to analyse them, we are confronted with difficulties, since men have as little of the idea of God as they have of the hobgoblins of their childhood.

When, therefore, we speak of God we must be sure what we are thinking about. Are we thinking of a personal God or an impersonal spirit. If the former, what are his attributes? if the latter, how does it concern us? The God-followers in the revealed religions have been taught to believe in a personal God; but the moment one asks them to define His attributes, one is faced with a difficulty. The fact is that the evolution of the idea of a personal God is from a pure analogy. He is described as either the King—the Great King—or the Father of man. But the use of such expressions does not advance the cause of knowledge. It is like an ant crawling on the foot of an elephant describing him as a vast plain. It is true so far as it can see, but it is not *the* truth.

The description of God as the Father or the King is merely a guess that He is loving and just. But can He be loving without being just and is He just without being loving and is He one, at the sacrifice of the other? It raises a great problem and enormous possibilities for the intervention of a redeemer who offers to make himself a scapegoat for his followers. But is it just that the Great God should punish one for the sins of another and what is the limit to such vicarious punishment? The fact is that—once we lend ourselves to the whispers of faith we are lost in the storm of credulity. A number of redeemers arise to enlist our submission. They all alike promise absolution for our

wrongs and a Paradise for our abode. And what do we know of the Paradise? Is it yet another analogy—a glorified garden where the Blessed are said to dwell for ever. But how will they dwell? What becomes of their bodies and of their souls, if they have any? And what is the soul? And what is its connection with the body? Has it a consciousness apart from it and does it need it in the Paradise? If so, what is its function there?

These questions raise numerous others till they create a Chinese puzzle, the escape from which becomes impossible except under the tutelage of a priest. It is he who allays all doubts, quiets all longings, gratifies all desires. But is it all? No, it is not all. We start again: What is the relation of God to man? Even redeemers do not redeem but on terms. What are their terms? Whither do we come from—whither do we go? All religions have tried to solve the riddle of life. But are any two religions agreed upon a single question? And do the religionists tell us anything more about the Divine Government—anything that we can reason out and prove?

The question of God is the essence of religion, but it is the one question upon which human speculation has made no progress. The Greeks killed or exiled their philosophers who attempted to solve that problem and denied their gods. The Indians permitted and indeed encouraged speculation in that region. The Chinese thought and wrote upon it. But so far as our knowledge of God is concerned, we stand to-day where we stood 3,000 years ago. All speculation during this interval ends in a circle or in agnosticism. The rest is faith—and on questions of faith, one cannot reason, since faith begins where reason fails.

Faith has evolved two distinct theories of God. The one that He is personal but without any attributes of personality—a contradiction in terms; another that He is a spirit possessing supreme power. The one is called Monotheism; the other leads to Pantheism. But Buddha was neither a monotheist nor a pantheist. He neither asserted the one, nor denied the other. And when he was confronted with those embarrassing

questions, his mind must have gone back to the days when he sat under the Bodhi tree—thinking, thinking, and thinking.

And when he died, he died thinking. He had not evolved any distinctive view of his own. His mind did not turn in that direction, because his doctrine of causation was complete without it. He started with a fact—the human suffering: he ends with its solution. He had set before himself one great problem, and he has found for it the one great solution. He regarded an excursus into any further question a digression, as much as if Euclid who sat down to prove a geometrical problem, had set about discovering the properties of matter. It may be that he did not go far enough, or if he did, he found himself in a dark room trying to find a thing which is not there. But such appears to be the whole scheme of his teachings. Six years of mental exercise in the then insoluble problems of life had warned him of the dangers of too wide a speculation. His method was essentially empiric. He analysed the root cause of all human suffering and he found it to be selfishness. He was struggling to find for it a cure; and he found it in his doctrine—the practice of selflessness. It was essentially an ethical problem, and to it he had offered an ethical solution. That problem carried him into metaphysical regions both backward and forward. But when he delved into them he entered a polemical field of speculation in which his doctrine appears most vulnerable. He essayed perhaps too far. But he could not have completed his doctrine, if he had stopped at the mere psychological issue. It would have resulted in utilitarianism and utilitarianism has never appealed to the masses, nor has it added by one jot to the sum total of human happiness.

Nevertheless, though he had no very clear views of his own—no doctrine to combat, no dogma to preach, he appears to have taken for granted that God existed and was ruler of the Paradise to which all souls went, on the completion of their cycle of life. His teachings shew this by evidence both positive and negative: of the former we have the following:—

"And when they<sup>(1)</sup> were thus seated the Blessed One gave thanks in these verses:—

"Whereso'er the prudent man shall take up his abode  
Let him support there good and upright men of self-control.

Let him give gifts to all such deities as may be there.  
Revered, they will revere him: honoured, they honour him again;

And gracious to him as a mother to her own, her only son.

And the man who has the grace of the gods, good fortune he beholds."<sup>(2)</sup>

On another occasion he was holding a discourse with a Brahman—Vashisth, to whom he addressed thus:—

"That man, Vashisth, born and brought up at Mansakat might, if he were asked the way to Mansakat, fall into doubt and difficulty; but to the *Tathagat*, when asked touching the path which leads to the world of Brahm<sup>(3)</sup>, there can be neither doubt nor difficulty. For Brahm, I know, Vashisth, and the world of Brahm, and the path which leads unto it. Yea, I know it even as one who had entered the Brahm world, and has been born within it."<sup>(4)</sup>

Before his Buddhhood his father's minister had asked him:

"Others say that creation comes from Ishwar.<sup>(5)</sup> What need then is there of the effort of conscious soul.<sup>(6)</sup> That which is the cause of the action of the world, is also determined as the cause of its ceasing to act."<sup>(7)</sup> To which Buddh replied:

(1) That is, Sunidha and Vasakara—ministers of Magadh who had invited Buddh to a meal after which they sat down to hear his discourse—*Parinirvan* 1—31; 11 S.B.E., 20.

(2) *Parinirvan* 1—31; 11 S.B.E., 20.

(3) Sk. *Brahm* "God" "The Creator." "The Brahm is omni-present and unchanging. He who knows this obtains omni-present and unchangeable happiness"—*Upanishads* 1 S.B.E., 46 "Their (the Jews') monotheism was perhaps indepen-

dently evolved; but the Buddhists at least showed a contemporary monotheism Mr. Huth, in *Life etc. of Buckle*, p. 238 quoted per Rhys. Davids' *Intro. Tievigga Sutta* 11 S.B.E., 164.

(4) *Tievigga Sutta*—1—43; 11 S.B.E., 186.

(5) Sk. *Ishwar*—the chief Ruler, "the supreme Creator", "God"

(6) The reference here is to "*Purush*", the "Person", "the Ego."

(7) *Buddhcharitra* IX—53; 49 S.B.E. 100.

"It is not for me to accept a theory which depends on the unknown and is all controverted, and which involved a hundred prepossessions; which wise man would go by another's belief? Mankind are like the blind directed in the darkness by the blind."(<sup>1</sup>)

Nevertheless when enlightenment came to him "The King of the Devas carried the news thereof joyfully to the Deva-heavens; and gods, men, and demons watered it with reverential circumambulations."(<sup>2</sup>) And when he took his last repast which culminated in his death, he told his host of the poisonous food he had eaten which no one even in God's heaven would digest: "I see no one, Kuṇḍ, on earth nor in Mar's heaven, nor in Brahm's heaven.....by whom when he has eaten it, that food can be assimilated."(<sup>3</sup>) In the *Dhammpaḍ* it is said: "If thou hast learned the destruction of the Shanskar, thou knowest the uncreated."(<sup>4</sup>) Referring to this Prof. Max Muller remarks: "This surely shows that even for Buddh, a something existed which is not made, and which, therefore, is imperishable and eternal."(<sup>5</sup>) On this Dr. Oldenberg adds the following pendant. "It appears to me, that we can find in the expression another meaning, and if we consider it in connection with the Buddhist theory of the world, we must find another meaning." The other meaning he suggests is a negative meaning that to the Buddhist asking after the eternal is the same thing as asking after the cessation of the impermanent."(<sup>6</sup>) But this is scarcely what Max Muller was dealing with.

And there are numerous other references to Brahm and the gods, to heaven and its supreme bliss, to which the discourse is devoted.(<sup>7</sup>) This will be adverted to later. For the present the frequent references to God and heaven in his discourses, and the fact that their existence had been categorically denied in the *Sankhya* philosophy which he had studied, makes one pause

(1) *Buddh Churitra*, IX—64; 49 S.B.E. 101, 102.

(2) *Ib.* XV—66; 49 S.B.E. 166.

(3) *Pari-Nirvan* IV—19; 11 S.B.E. 73.

(4) *Dhammpaḍ* V—383.

(5) *Intro. I C.P.* XLIV; quoted by Oldenberg, *Buddhism* 283 f.n.

(6) *Buddhism* 283, 284, f.n.

(7) *Sukhavasi*—"the land of Bliss."—49 S.B.E. 1-75.

before committing him to a positive atheism. It is true that his references to God are more or less casual; it is equally true that early in his life when he was questioned about God's creation he had expressed a doubt; but the fact that he never committed himself to a definite view upon it, nor indeed adverted to that subject again does not show that he was atheistic, but only that he had constructed his system without having recourse to the intervention of God. It is perfectly consistent with his belief in God—a just God who sets his law in motion and leaves men free to obey or disobey it.

This is all that can be said on the question with reference to his direct teaching.

So much for the positive evidence. Turning next to the negative evidence tending to the same conclusion, it has been said that his system was atheistic, in that it took no account of God. But a system cannot be considered atheistic, merely because it is complete independently of God. Buddh believed in self-help. He was a believer in the free will of man. He was averse to the introduction of a *tertium quid* in what he had conceived to be his purely rationalistic teaching. His system therefore, could not be denounced as atheistic any more than the solution of a geometrical problem can be called atheistic, because it applies to its solution the pure light of reason.

In order to clear the ground it would be just as well to refer to other controversial points in this connection; since an amount of unreasoning prejudice has been created in the popular mind on the subjects dearest to man's heart, ascribing to him a teaching which he did not teach and which, indeed, he categorically denied. Such is the view commonly held and generally expressed by European critics of his system that his Nirvan is annihilation pure and simple and that Buddhistic gospel of peace was in reality a gospel of annihilation.<sup>(1)</sup> Now it may be said in favour of this error that it is as old as Buddh himself; and one of his interlocutors had put to him this pointed question: "And again Siha, there is a way in which one speaking truly could say of me. The Saman Gautam

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(1) Oldenberg—*Buddhism* 271; St. Hilaire—*Buddhism*, 176.



maintains annihilating ; he teaches the doctrine of annihilation ; and in this doctrine he trains his disciples.”<sup>(1)</sup> “ And in which way is it, Siha, that one speaking truly could say (this) of me : I proclaim, Siha, the annihilation of lust, of ill-will, of delusion ; I proclaim the annihilation of the manifold conditions (of heart) which are evil and not good.”<sup>(2)</sup>

This is, therefore, conclusive of his intention. It will have to be seen later whether his doctrine leads to no other result.

M. St. Hilaire thinks that Nirvan is annihilation and implies atheism.<sup>(3)</sup> That it does not imply atheism seems to be clear. It remains to be seen whether it implies annihilation. Truly Buddh had reflected to himself under the tree of knowledge : “ Difficult will it be for men to grasp the law of casuality, the chain of causes and effects. And this also will be very hard for them to grasp, the coming of all conformations to an end, the loosening from everything earthly, the extinction of desire, the cessation of longing, the end, the Nirvan.”

The third question which has aroused controversy is the question relating to the existence and nature of Soul. A direct question on this point was put by King Milinda : “ Is there such a thing, Nagsen, as the soul ? ” “ In the highest sense, O King, there is no such things.”<sup>(4)</sup>

Nagsen's answer referred to it in “ the highest sense.” But in how many senses is the term not used ! “ Soul ” in Sanskrit literally means the breath. But it has come to mean the self-conscious centre of human personality. The Vedantist regarded it as emanation of the divine spirit, something distinct from and independent of the body in which it inheres. So did Plato <sup>(5)</sup> and the Jews. <sup>(6)</sup> It was believed to be both immaterial and indestructible, everlasting and immortal—a view which Christ adopted <sup>(7)</sup> as Spirit. <sup>(8)</sup> Understood in this sense, Buddh denied its existence. People generally mistake a mere consciousness for soul. It is, however, a mere mental abstraction, as much an abstraction as any generic term. “ This is

(1) *M. V.* VI—31-5 ; 17 *S.B.E.* 111.

(2) *M. V.* VI—31-7 ; 17 *S.B.E.* 112.

(3) Quoted *Supra Buddhism*, 175.

(4) *Milinda* III—6 ; 35 *S.B.E.* 111.

(5) *Phædrus*.

(6) *Genesis* 11—7.

(7) *Math.* X—28.

(8) *Math.* XXVII—50 ; *John* XIX—30.

my body, the material framed out of the four elements, begotten by my father and mother.....but that is my consciousness, which clings firmly thereto, is joined to it, like a precious stone, beautiful and valuable, octahedral, well-polished, clear and pure, adorned with all perfection to which a string is attached, blue or yellow, red or white, or a yellowish band.”<sup>(1)</sup> But the question does not end here. It is only in this sense that Buddha denied the existence of the soul; but it must not be thence concluded that he had thereby committed himself to materialism. On the other hand, the sense in which he denied the existence of the soul, may be taken equally to have denied the existence of the body.

Indeed, the existence of soul was an integral part of his system, for upon it he based his theory of re-incarnation. This he had to do as a matter of metaphysical necessity. But it was not his immediate purpose, for he had to investigate quite a different matter,—namely, the cause of suffering and the means for its extinction. This is how he formulated the question which is the corner-stone of his system : and of which he had discovered the solution under the tree of knowledge. “Then the Blessed One (at the end of these seven days) during the first watch of the night fixed his mind upon the chain of causation, in direct and in reverse order : From Ignorance<sup>(2)</sup> spring the *Sanskars*,<sup>(3)</sup> from the Sanskar springs Consciousness, from Consciousness springs Name and Form, from Name and Form spring the six Provinces (of the six senses),<sup>(4)</sup> from the six Provinces springs Contact, from Contact springs Sensation, from Sensation springs Thirst (or Desire), from Thirst springs Attachment, from Attachment springs Existence, from Existence springs Birth, from Birth spring Old Age and Death, grief, lamentation, suffering, dejection, and despair. Such is the origination of this whole mass of suffering.

“Again, by the destruction of Ignorance which consists in the complete absence of lust, the *Sanskars* are destroyed ;

(1) *Samanphal Sutta*.

(2) Ignorance is explained to mean “Not to know suffering, not to know the cause of suffering” 13 S.B.E., 75 f.n.(2).

(3) *Sanskara*—production.

(4) Procreation, i.e., eye, ear, nose, tongue, body (or the faculty of touch) and mind—in modern Psychology they all resolve themselves into a single thing—touch.

by the destruction of the *Sanskars*, Consciousness is destroyed ; by the destruction of Consciousness, Name and Form are destroyed ; by the destruction of Name and Form, the six Provinces are destroyed ; by the destruction of the six Provinces, Contact is destroyed ; by the destruction of Contact, Sensation is destroyed ; by the destruction of Sensation, Thirst is destroyed ; by the destruction of Thirst, Attachment is destroyed ; by the destruction of Attachment, Existence is destroyed ; by the destruction of Existence, Birth is destroyed ; by the destruction of Birth, Old Age and Death, grief, lamentation, suffering, dejection and despair are destroyed. Such is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering.”<sup>(1)</sup>

The above is in short the whole Buddhistic creed. It explains the cause of suffering and provides the cure. It is the first Buddhist formula ; and this is the second :—

“ This, O monks, is the sacred truth of the origin of suffering : it is the thirst (or desire) for being which leads from birth to birth ; together with lust and desire, which finds gratification here and there ; the thirst for pleasure, the thirst for being, the thirst for power.

“ This, O monks, is the sacred truth of the extinction of suffering : the extinction of this thirst by complete annihilation of desire, letting it go, expelling it, separating oneself from it, giving no room.”

And in so stating the Law, Buddha was stating an elementary truth. It is desire or the thirst for pleasure which is responsible for births and the perpetuation of the human species. If that desire can be effectively curbed, there would be no births, and no deaths and in a very short time man will cease to be.

Buddha states his propositions in the pedantic style of his age. He throws them into a form of Sorites ; but, as such, it is logically faulty and all he wishes to convey is this : “ Oblivious of the suffering to which life is subject, man begets children, and is thus the cause of old age and death. If he

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<sup>(1)</sup> *Mahavagga* I—1-2 ; 13 S.E.E. 75-78.

would only realize what suffering he would add to by his act, he would desist from the procreation of children ; and so stop the operation of old age and death."

The first noble truth is that existence involves suffering, which became the subject of the following discourse: "The world of transmigration, my disciples, has its beginning in eternity. No origin can be perceived, from which beings start, and hampered by ignorance, fettered by craving, stray and wander. Which think you are more—the tears which you have shed as you strayed and wandered on this long journey, grieving and weeping because you were bound to what you hated and separated from what you loved—which are more, these tears, or the waters in the four oceans? A mother's death, a son's death, a daughter's death, loss of kinsmen, loss of property, sickness, all these you have endured through long ages—and while you felt these losses and strayed and wandered on this long journey, grieving and weeping because you were bound to what you hated and separated from what you loved, the tears that you shed are more than the water in the four oceans."<sup>(1)</sup>

The fallacy of this reasoning has already been adverted to. Life does involve unhappiness, but is it all unhappiness? That it is not, was too well known to the Master who had warned his monks against being caught in the net of worldly delight. However, it is one view and shared by philosophers like Schopenhauer, emperors like Marcus Aurelius and the Christian divines, like Pope Innocent III.<sup>(2)</sup> To Buddha it was a religious faith and he made it the corner-stone of his philosophy.

His second truth is the origin of suffering which he ascribes to Desire (*Tanha*—lit. "Thirst.") The thirst or craving for life, in the wide sense, engenders a desire for pleasure which results in procreation, the craving for existence in the dying man which is translated into a re-birth,<sup>(3)</sup> the craving for the wealth, power and gratification of personal ambition, which

(1) *Samyutta-Nikkaya* XV—3.

(2) *Maj-Nik.* 120; *Milinda* 11—6. 33

(3) *Decontemptu Mundi Pat. Lat.* CC S.B.E. 50, XVII Cols. 701-748.

leads to misery and disappointment. It is what Carlyle called "the divine discontent" which according to Buddha is the root of all human misery in this life. The chain of causation with its twelve links is only explanatory of this truth. It is the wheel of life. It ascribes the perpetuation of consciousness in a re-birth to a mere desire for the continuance of life. The ignorance of this fact is the third sacred truth. The creature born in fulfilment of a prenatal desire for existence is in no sense the identical self. It is a new personality, but come into existence because of the expression of a desire for re-birth. The truth of the cessation of suffering must then be grasped by one who wishes to free himself from the penalty of a re-birth.

But these noble truths though essential for the acquisition of knowledge are as nothing to the fourth and last truth which leads to the extinction of suffering, and gives practical directions for that purpose: It is the Noble Eightfold path consisting of right views, right aspirations, right speech, right conduct, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right rapture.

Buddha assumed that life is a suffering and its only solution is "no life". But is life a suffering? That it is full of suffering, in that desires arise, but remain ungratified, hopes are disappointed, and even for those who have suffered least and enjoyed most of life, the only path open is that to the grave. Even to those who concede the major premise how does the course suggested prevent suffering? Only there is no one to suffer, for man has committed race-suicide. The underlying assumption made by Buddha, therefore, appears to be too wide. There is, no doubt, that he saw death and disease, pain and suffering, and the pathetic infirmities of old age. But he never realized that both pleasure and pain are relative terms, and that there can be no pleasure without pain. For after all, pain awakens desire, and desire, let us assume, leads to births and deaths. But Buddha's plan would end human existence before it would end human suffering. It was never a remedy for the conquest of suffering. That remedy is found in the manly struggle with it and not in the craven surrender of self. That Buddha himself was not slow to

perceive the *reductio ad absurdum* of his own teaching—is manifest from his sermon on the middle path delivered to his five old disciples whom he reclaimed at Benares: “There are two extremes, O Bhikkhus, which he who has given up the world, ought to avoid. What are these two extremes? A life given to pleasures, devoted to pleasures and lusts: this is degrading, sensual, vulgar, ignoble, and profitless; and a life given to mortifications: this is painful, ignoble, and profitless. By avoiding these two extremes, O Bhikkhus, the Tathagat has gained the knowledge of the Middle Path which leads to insight, which leads to wisdom, which conduces to calm, to knowledge, to the Samboḍhi, to Nirvan.

“Which, O Bhikkhus, is this Middle Path, the knowledge of which the Tathagat has gained, which leads to insight, which leads to wisdom, which conduces to calm, to knowledge, to the Samboḍhi, to Nirvan? It is the holy eight-fold Path—namely, Right Belief, Right Aspiration, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Means of Livelihood, Right Endeavour, Right Memory, Right Meditation. This, O Bhikkhus, is the Middle Path, the knowledge of which the Tathagat has gained, which leads to insight, which leads to wisdom, which conduces to calm, to knowledge, to the Samboḍhi, to Nirvan.”<sup>(1)</sup>

This sermon, then, has the effect of reducing the doctrine within reasonable limits. It avoids the extremes of “No life—no Death”, with which he started the enunciation of his doctrine. He does not qualify his dogma, but ascribes to it a qualified meaning. So construed, his doctrine removes from it the assumption of unqualified pessimism which it is supposed to inculcate. It is true, that life is a suffering and that life involves suffering are two things apart; but the difference between them is a difference of degree; whether the sum-total of human life is a life with preponderating pleasure or suffering is one upon which no philosopher can dogmatize—though philosophers have become sharply divided upon the question, as if in the varied conditions of life there were no other possibility. Death and disease are regarded as sufferings, but

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(1) *M. V.* I—6-17, 18, 13 *S.B.E.* 94; 95.

why should death be called a suffering when it puts an end to suffering is another question. Could Buddha have said, can any one say that if Death be eliminated from life, suffering shall cease? Would not the suffering grow: and would not a point then be reached when eternal life itself would be a prolonged and an unendurable suffering? But in the present condition, because death cannot be averted, man regards Death as his worst enemy. But does it not shew that he regards life with all its sufferings as a life to which he is dearly attached and from which he is loth to part?

Human speculation has not yet fathomed the depths of the hereafter. And it may be that he will never be able to do so. It cannot then be asserted that life is a resultant suffering and that life without death and disease would not become too monotonous.

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### *Soul or No-Soul.*

Buddhist view on Soul is a negation. Buddha has again tried to shew that such a thing as soul, so far as human consciousness is aware, never existed and can never exist. Not only does he deny its existence in man, but he equally denies its existence in the gods. But the qualifications attending his denial must be understood. As previously stated, Soul means "the breath" and the Vedantist asserts that it is the breath of God, that it is an immaterial principle distinct from body and analogous in nature to the divine essence which has created and pervades the universe. Being a divine emanation, it returns to the divine soul upon its leaving the body. "He who beholds all beings in the Self, and the Self in all beings, he never turns away from It."<sup>(1)</sup> "All this, whatsoever moves on earth, is to be hidden in the Lord (the Self). When thou hast surrendered all this, then thou mayest enjoy."<sup>(2)</sup> "He who knows at the same time both the cause and the

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<sup>(1)</sup> *Vajrasani Samhita Upanishad* § 6,  
1 S. B. E. 312.

<sup>(2)</sup> *Ib.* § 1, *Ib.* 311

destruction (the perishable body), overcomes Death by destruction (the perishable body) and obtains immortality through (knowledge), the true cause.”<sup>(1)</sup> “All this is Brahman. Let a man meditate on that (visible world) as beginning, ending and breathing in it the Brahman.”<sup>(2)</sup>

“He is myself within the heart, smaller than a corn of rice, smaller than a corn of barley, smaller than a mustard seed, smaller than a canary seed or the kernel of the canary seed. He also is myself within the heart, greater than the earth, greater than the sky, greater than heaven, greater than all these worlds.”<sup>(3)</sup> This is a pure and simple pantheism. The universe is imbued with the spirit of God; and so is man. That spirit is supreme. All things emanate therefrom and into it return. It is equally the Platonic view that the soul is an immaterial and indestructible substance—a view adopted alike by the Christians and the Jews.

Plato puts into the mouth of Socrates his argument in proof of the immortality of soul. He says: “Every soul is immortal: for whatever is continually moved is immortal; but that which moves another and is moved by another, when it ceases to move, ceases to live. Therefore, that only which moves itself, since it does not quit itself, never ceases to be moved, but is also the source and beginning of motion to all other things that are moved. But a beginning is uncreate: for every thing that is created must necessarily be created from a beginning, but a beginning itself from nothing whatever; for if a beginning were created from anything, it would not be a beginning.

“Since then, it is uncreate, it must also of necessity be indestructible; for should a beginning perish, it could neither itself be ever created from anything, nor anything else from it, since all things must be created from a beginning. Thus then the beginning of motion is that which moves itself; and this can neither perish, nor be created, or all heaven and all

(1) *Vajrasūci Samhitā Upanishad*, § 14; 1 S. B. E. 48.  
Ib. 313.

(2) *Ib.* 111-14-3; *Ib.* 48.

(3) *Chhandaḥgya-Upanishad* Ib. 111-14-1;



creation must collapse and come to a stand-still, and never again have any means whereby it may be moved or created.

“Since then, it appears that which is moved by itself is immortal; no one will be ashamed to say that this is the very essence and true notion of the soul. For every body which is moved from without, is soul-less, but that which is moved from within of itself, possesses a soul, since this is the very nature of soul. But if this be the case,—that there is nothing else which moves itself except soul, soul must necessarily be both uncreate and immortal. This then may suffice for its immortality.”<sup>(1)</sup>—A *petitio principii* both the Vedāntist and the Buddhist would exclaim!

Buddh, of course combated this view. He asked to himself the following question. How do we know about anything?—only through the five <sup>(2)</sup> gate-ways of knowledge, eyes, ears, nose, taste and touch. All knowledge of being, that is what we are, and becoming what we become is communicated to us. Now these five senses produce different impressions on me. If I close my eyes I don't see; the ears don't hear—and so on. Therefore, these impressions produce in me certain sensations; and consciousness is nothing more than a bundle of these sensations. But these sensations keep on changing from moment to moment; and, in fact, in order that I may continually see the impact of light must continuously fall upon the retina. To use the metaphor which Buddh himself used, we are like a flowing river; at no single moment is its water the same, but still it retains its identity; or to use a modern metaphor, we are like the motion-pictures in the cinematograph, which produces upon one the impression of a racing horse from the blind of thousands of pictures, falling upon the eye in quick succession. But where is the horse as we see him? Take again the case of sleep. When are we without our consciousness? And when we dream dreams, how different is our consciousness then from what we consider to be our real consciousness! For compendiousness of expression,

(1) *Phædrus*, 51.53; 1 *Plato* (*Bohu*) 321, 322.

(2) In another place he mentions 5; mind being the last.

we speak of the aggregate of impressions as "consciousness" and this consciousness we speak of sometimes as "Ego," "The Soul," "The Spirit," "The Mind." But what do we know of the noumenon underlying this consciousness? And what is true of the mind is equally true of the body. It is an ever-changing phenomenon, only known through the five gate-ways of knowledge.

Buddhist philosophy is often presented in the un-translated Buddhist jargon, with the result that the learner feels readily confused, but seldom convinced that he has grasped its essential principle. But in plain prose, this is all that Buddha intended to teach; and his teachings may be summed up in the following dicta, namely:—

- (1) All knowledge arises from consciousness.
- (2) That consciousness begins and ends with sensation.
- (3) Therefore consciousness is nothing more than sensation.

That is the first syllogism. And here is the second:—

- (1) All sensations are impermanent.
- (2) Body is such sensation.
- (3) Therefore it is impermanent.

That body cannot be known apart from sensations is clear. They proceed in quick succession. Take for instance,—the light; it travels at the rate of 18,000 miles a second. Therefore, there is no such thing as a fixed light. What we see is nothing more than a succession of impacts of light, and at no two moments are we the same; since these moments of fresh impacts must be added to our consciousness, therefore, we are an ever-changing object, or an object with an ever-changing identity.

The basis for the body and the soul is the same. It is not different; and if one says that the soul is immortal, one must equally predicate that the body is immortal, which would be absurd. Consequently, there is no sound basis for the assertion that the soul is distinct from the body, is ethereal and immortal. On the other hand, if one regards "consciousness" as the soul, then it exists as much as the body; but consciousness is nothing

more than a bundle of sensations, produced on or retained by the brain. It may be called the mind ; but the brain disappearing, the mind also disappears. If it doesn't, what evidence have we that it survives the body ? And why should it, any more than the five organs of the senses which have perished with the body ? What functions can it perform without those organs ?

This is not materialism, since Buddh does not admit the existence of matter. It is not the doctrine of *Maya*, because Buddh has no warranty for conceding the existence of an all-pervading spirit, nor was he prepared to dogmatize with the Vedantist—that all the world is a dream, a mirage, a will-o'-the-wisp. Nor is he prepared to admit the existence of Brahm as something distinct from the universe. The 'I' of Brahm is the 'I' of man and both are illusory. This question was, early in his studies, put to him by Araḍ, who asked : " What is that Self which perceives the actions of the five roots of the mind, touch, smell, taste, sight and hearing ? What is that which is active in the two ways of motion in the hands and in the feet ?

" The problem of the soul appears in the expressions ' I say,' ' I know and perceive,' ' I come ', and ' I go ' or ' I will stay here. ' The soul is not the body : it is not thy eye, not thy ear, not thy nose, not thy tongue ; nor is it thy mind. The ' I ' is he who feels the touch in thy body. The ' I ' is the smeller in the nose, the taster in the tongue, the seer in the eye, the hearer in the ear, and the thinker in the mind. The ' I ' moves thy hands and thy feet. The ' I ' is thy soul. Doubt in the existence of the soul is irreligious, and without discerning this truth there is no way of salvation. Deep speculation will easily involve the mind : it leads to confusion and unbelief ; but a purification of the soul leads to the way of escape. True deliverance is reached by removing from the crowd and leading a hermit's life, depending entirely on alms for food. Putting away all desire and clearly recognising the non-existence of matter, we reach a state of perfect emptiness. Here we find the condition of immaterial life. As the munja grass, when freed from its horny case, or as the wild bird escapes from its

prison, so the soul goes liberating itself from all limitations, finds perfect release. 'This is true deliverance, but those only who will have deep faith will learn.'

Bodhisatv found no satisfaction in these teachings. He replied: "People are in bondage, because they have not yet removed the idea of 'I.'"

"The thing and its quality are different in our thought, but not in reality. Heat is different from fire in our thought, but you cannot remove heat from fire in reality. You say that you can remove the qualities and leave the thing, but if you think your theory to the end, you will find that this is not so.

"Is not man an organism of many aggregates? Do we not consist of various skan dhas, as our sages call them? Man consists of the material form of sensation, of thought, of dispositions and lastly, of understanding. That which men call the 'ego' when they say 'I am' is not an entity behind the skandhas; it originates by the co-operation of the skandhas. There is mind; there is sensation and thought, and there is truth; and truth is mind when it walks in the path of righteousness. But there is no separate ego-soul, outside or behind the thought of man. He who believes that the ego is a distinct being has no correct conception of things. The very search for the atman is wrong; it is a wrong start and it will lead you in the false direction.

"How much confusion of thought comes from our interest in self, and from our vanity when thinking 'I am so great', or 'I have done this wonderful deed?' The thought of your 'I' stands between your rational nature and truth; banish it, and then you will see things as they are. He who thinks correctly will rid himself of ignorance and acquire wisdom. The ideas 'I am' and 'I shall be' or 'I shall not be' do not occur to a clear thinker.

"Moreover; if your ego remains, how can you attain true deliverance? If the 'ego' is to be reborn in any of the three worlds, be it in hell, upon earth, or be it even in heaven, we shall

meet again and again the same inevitable doom of existence. We shall be implicated in egotism and sin.

"All combination is subject to separation, and we cannot escape birth, disease, old age, and death. Is this a final escape?"

Arañ said: "Do you not see around you the effects of *karm*? What makes men different in character, station, possession, and fate? It is their *karm*, and *karm* includes merit and demerit. The transmigration of the soul is subject to its *karm*. We inherit from former existences the evil effects of our evil deeds and the good effects of our good deeds. If that were not so, how could we be different?"

The Tathagat meditated deeply on the problems of transmigration and *karm*, and found the truth that lies in them.

"The doctrine of *karm*," he said, "is undeniable, for every effect has its cause. What a man soweth, he shall reap, and what we reap we must have sown in our previous lives.

"I see that the transmission of soul is subject to the law of cause and effect, for the fates of men are of their own making. But I see no transmigration of the 'I.'

"Is not this individuality of mine a combination, material as well as mental? Is it not made up of qualities that sprang into being by a gradual evolution. The five roots of sense-perception in this organism have come from ancestors who performed these functions. The ideas which I think, came to me partly from others who thought them, and partly they rise from combination of these ideas in my own mind. Those who used the same sense-organs and thought the same ideas before I was composed into this individuality of mine—are my previous existences; they are my ancestors as much as 'I' of yesterday am the father of 'I' of to-day, and the *karm* of my past deeds conditions the fate of my present existence.

"Supposing there were an *atman* that performs the actions of the senses, then if the door of sight were torn down and the eye plucked out, that *atman* would be able to peep through the larger aperture and see the forms of its surroundings better and more clearly than before. It would be able to hear sounds

better of the ears were torn away ; smell better, if the nose were cut off ; taste better, if the tongue were pulled out ; and feel better, if the body were destroyed.

" I observe the preservation and transmission of soul ; I perceive the truth of karm, but see no *atman* whom your doctrine makes the doer of your deeds. There is re-birth without the transmigration of self. For this *atman*, this self, this ego in the ' I say ' and in the ' I will ' is an illusion. If this self were a reality, how could there be an escape from selfhood ? The terror of hell would be infinite, and no release could be granted. The evils of existence would not be due to our ignorance and sin, but would constitute the very nature of our being." (1)

And later on when he obtained the enlightenment, he adverted to the same subject in his sermon to the five disciples.

" And the Blessed One thus spoke to the five Bhikkhus : " The body (Rupe), O Bhikkhus, is not the self. If the body, O Bhikkhus, were the self, the body would not be subject to disease, and we should be able to say : ' Let my body be such and such a one, let my body not be such and such a one.' But since the body, O Bhikkhus, is not the self, therefore the body is subject to disease, and we are therefore not able to say : ' Let my body be such and such a one, let my body not be such and such a one.'

" Sensation (*Veđana*), O Bhikkhus is not the self,.....(&c)  
Perception (*Sanna*) is not the self.....The *Sankharas* are not the self.....Consciousness (*Vijñan*) (*Gyan*) is not the self.....(&c).

" Now what do you think, O Bhikkhus, is the body permanent or perishable ? "

" It is perishable, Lord."

" And that which is perishable, does that cause pain or joy?"

" It causes pain, Lord."

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(1) P. Carus: *Gospel of Buddhism* 24, 24-26.

"And that which is perishable, painful, subject to change, is it possible to regard that in this way : this is mine, this am I, this is my self ?"

"That is impossible, Lord."

"Is sensation permanent or perishable ?"

"No, Lord."

"Therefore, O Bhikkhus, whatever body has been, will be and is now, belonging or not belonging to sentient beings, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, distant or near, all that body is not mine, is not me, is not my self : this—it should be considered by right knowledge according to the truth."<sup>(1)</sup>

That Buddha's views on the subject were uncompromising and clear is evident from all his writings. Reference has already been made to his earliest pronouncements on the subject. In his later discourses he has only re-emphasized those views. For example a Bhikkhu—Sati, had been detected preaching at variance with his doctrine. He had said : "It is mind which persists and is re-born after death unchanged".<sup>(2)</sup> The Sangh protest and report the matter to the Master. He questions him—

B. "Is this true Sati ?"

S. "Yes, Lord, so do I understand you to teach. "

B. "What, Sati, is that consciousness ?"

S. "That speaker and feeler, Sir, who experiences the result of good and evil deeds done here or there."

B. "And then, foolish man, from whom have you got such a doctrine as one of mine ? Have I not taught you by many methods that consciousness is from a cause, except from a cause there is no coming into being of consciousness.....And consciousness is reckoned only in accordance with the conditions causing it ;—visual cognition from sight and seen object, idea from mind and mental object, just as fire is different according to its fuel. "

"Do you see that this has become, Bhikkhus,

(1) *M. V.* 1.6-38-44 ; 13 *S. B. E.* 100, 101. destruction of craving " 38).

(2) *Majjhima-Nikay Sutta* ("The

“ Do you see that the becoming is according to the stimulus (literally “ the food ”) ?

“ Do you see that if the stimulus cease, then that which has become ceases, Bhikkhus ?”

On another occasion Buddha put up for a night at a potter's house in Rajgrah when he met another monk Pukkusati, ex-King of Taxila, who according to tradition had abdicated and turned a Buddhist and an ascetic on learning its doctrines from King Bimbeshwar who had sent them inscribed on golden plates. Neither knew the identity of the other and seeing him Buddha invited him to spend the night with him to which he readily consented. The ex-King was the first to disclose his identity. He told his companion the facts of his conversion and that it was the Exalted One - Gautam of the Shakyas whose Dhamm had so moved him, adding : “ Where, Bhikkhu is now that Gautam ?” “ In the North country, friend, at Savatthi.”

P. “ Have you seen him ? If you saw him, would you know him ?”

B. “ Nay, friend, if I saw him I should not know him. Listen, Bhikkhu, I will teach you Dhamm.”

P. “ So be it, friend.”

And Buddha began--Man consists of six constituent elements--namely, earth, water, heat, air, space and consciousness ; he has six fields of contact with the external world (the sixth being the mind) ; in 18 ways he is affected by the world, and there is a four-fold platform, whereon if he stand, the surgings of fancy make no headway, and he is fit to be called sage and saint. That platform is (1) true knowledge, how to destroy all sorrow ; (2) True Nirvan ; (3) True resignation, namely, of all conditions leading to re-birth ; (4) True Peace ; i.e., the tranquillization of lust, hate and illusion.

As he ceased Pukkusati fell at the stranger's feet exclaiming “ I have found the Master ! I have found the Perfectly Enlightened One.”



In the Buddhist doctrine the law of causation plays an important part. But to a Buddhist that cause is only another name for consciousness.

“ In this monk, O disciples, who thus guards himself and rules his consciousness, who is immovably intent thereon in holy effort and is steadfast in self-culture, there arises a sensation of pleasure. Then he knows as follows : ‘ In me has arisen this pleasurable sensation ; this has arisen from a cause, not without a cause. Where lies this cause ? It lies in this body of mine. But this body of mine is impermanent, has become (or, been formed), been produced by causes. A pleasurable sensation, the cause of which lies in the impermanent, originated cause—produced body, how can it be permanent ? ’ Thus, as well with regard to the body as to the pleasurable sensation, he commits himself to the contemplation of impermanence, transitoriness, evanescence, renunciation, cessation, resignation. While he commits himself to the contemplation of impermanence, etc., as well with regard to the body as to the pleasurable sensation, he desists from all yearning (propensity) based on the body and on pleasurable sensation.”

“ Is there such a thing as soul ” asked King Milinda to the sage Nagsen : “ None in the highest sense of the term ” was Nagsen’s reply.<sup>(1)</sup> “ What is it then ” he asked : “ Is it not like a man sitting in his house and looking out of his five windows ? ”

Nagsen—“ I will tell you about the five doors,<sup>(2)</sup> great King, listen, and give heed attentively. If the living principle within sees forms through the eyes in the manner that you mention, choosing its window as it likes, can it not then see forms not only through the eye, but also through each of the other five organs of the sense ? And, in like manner, can it not then, as well hear sounds, and experience taste, and smell odours, and feel touch, and discern conditions through each of the other five organs of sense, besides the one you have in each case specified ?

“ No, Sir. ”

(1) *Milinda* II-6 ; 35 S. B. E. III

(2) The five senses ; he omits the mind.

"Then these powers are not united one to another indiscriminately, the latter sense to the former organ, and so on. Now we, as we are seated here in the palace, with these windows all thrown open, and in full daylight, if we only, stretch forth our heads, can see all kinds of objects plainly. Can the living principle do the same when the doors of the eyes are thrown open? When the doors of the ears are thrown open, can it do so? Can it then not only hear sounds, but see sights, experience tastes, smell odours, feel touch, and discern conditions? And so with each of the windows?"

"No, Sir."

"Then these powers are not united one to another indiscriminately. Now again, great King, if Dinna here were to go outside and stand in the gate-way, would you be aware that he had done so?"

"Yes, I should know it."

"And if the same Dinna were to come back again, and stand before you, would you be aware of his having done so?"

"Yes, I should know it."

"Well, great King, would the living principle within discern, in like manner, if anything possessing flavour were laid upon the tongue, its sourness, or its saltness, or its acidity, or its pungency, or its astringency, or its sweetness?"

"Yes, it would know it."

"But when the flavour has passed into the stomach would it still discern these things?"

"Certainly not."

"Then these powers are not united one to the other indiscriminately. Now suppose, O King, a man were to have a hundred vessels of honey brought and poured into one trough, and then, having had his mouth closed over and tied up, were to have him cast into the trough full of honey. Would he know whether that into which he had been thrown was sweet, or whether it was not?"

"No Sir."

"But why not?"

"Because the honey could not get into his mouth?"

“ Then, great King, these powers are not united one to another indiscriminately.<sup>(1)</sup>”

That is, “ your living principle within ” cannot make use of whichever windows it pleases. And the simile of the man inside the house does not hold good. In another place, he gives the instance of a man who loads his bullocks with salt. But how does he know that it is salt. He sees and finds it white, tastes and finds it salty, weighs and finds it heavy. He then infers that it is salt. But if the soul were the man looking out of the five windows of his house he would see salt and need not go to the trouble of seeing and tasting and weighing it.<sup>(2)</sup>

Then he turns to the body ; and points out that it is nothing more than an inference from certain sensations. A man's hair, nails, teeth, skin or flesh, or the bodily form do not constitute his individuality and apart from the sensations of these, there is nothing else known. What is then, Nagsen ? “ A mere word, Sire, is Nagsen. What is Nagsen, then ? thou speakest false then, Sire, and thou liest, there is no Nagsen.”

From Nagsen's point of view, and it is this view of the Orthodox Buddhist, all objects can only be known by their sensations. These sensations vary, are impermanent and independent of one another. There is no ruling and controlling master over them. There is, therefore, no such thing as “ I ” or “ You.” They are mere words. There is as much reality in the body as in the “ Soul.” It cannot be grasped at all by cognition, that especially it cannot consist in thought, be of the nature of cognition since all cognition is conditioned by the organs of cognition.

As Buddhaghosh put it “ Any thing whatever within called Soul<sup>(3)</sup> who sees, who moves the limbs etc., there is not ”<sup>(4)</sup> Before him the *Pitakas* had said the same thing : “ It is not a fit question to ask : who experiences contact ? Who is it that feels ? This is the right way to question : *conditioned* by what, is there contact ? *conditioned* by what, is there feeling ?<sup>(5)</sup>”

(1) *Milinda* II—3.16 ; 35 S. B. E. 98.

(2) *Ib.* II.3-16, 35 S. B. E. 98.

(3) *Pail*—“ *Atta* ” “ the soul.”

(4) *Sumangal-Vilasini*, 1-195.

(5) *Samgutta Nikay* 11.13.

This was explained by Nagasen to King Milinda in a more popular way.

The King,—“ Does thought perception arise wherever sight arises ? ”

Nagsen,---“ Yes, O King where the one is, there is the other.”

K.—“ And which of the two arises first ? ”

N.—“ First sight, then thought.”

K.—“ Then does the sight issue, as it were, a command to thought, saying : ‘ Do you spring up there where I have, ’ or does thought issue command to sight, saying : ‘ Where you sprung up there will I ’ ? ”

N.—“ It is not so, great King, there is no intercourse between the one and the other.”

K.—“ Then how is it, Sir, that thought arises wherever sight does ? ”

N.—“ Because of there being a sloping down, and because of there being a door, and because of there being a habit, and because of there being an association.”

K.—“ How is that ? Give an illustration of mind arising where sight arises, because of there being a sloping down.”

N.—“ Now what do you think, great King, when it rains, where will the water go to ? ”

K.—“ It will follow the slope of the ground.”

N.—“ And if it were to rain again, where would the water go to ? ”

K.—“ It would go the same way as the first water had gone.”

N.—“ What then ? Does the first water issue, as it were, command to the second, saying : ‘ Do you go where I have, ’ or does the second issue command to the first, saying : ‘ Whither-soever you go, thither will I ’ ? ”

K.—“It is not so, Sir. There is no intercourse between the two. Each goes its way because of the slope of the ground.”

N.—“Just so, great King, is it by reason of the nature of the slope that where sight has arisen there also does thought arise. And neither does the sight perception, issue command to the mind perception saying: ‘Where I have arisen, there do you also spring up,’ nor does the mind perception inform the sight perception, saying: ‘Where thou hast arisen there will I also spring up.’ There is no conversation, as it were, between them. All that happens, happens through natural slope.”<sup>(1)</sup>

It will be observed that while Buddha was preaching this doctrine of the unreality of “soul” and “self” “ego” and “non-ego” to his disciples in India, his contemporary, Heraclitus, nicknamed “the Dark” by his successors already referred to in a preceding chapter, was expounding the same doctrine in Greece. And curiously, both Buddha and Heraclitus illustrate their common view-point by having recourse to the same illustration. For, as Buddha had pointed out that a river retains its nominal identity, though in no two moments is its water the same, so does Heraclitus “Into the same river we go down and we do not go down. For, into the same river no man can enter twice; ever it disperses itself and collects itself again, or rather, at once it flows in, and flows out.” The eyes and ears delude one into a show of permanence, where there is only uninterrupted change.

Now assume that we have reached the stage of consciousness. We have next to examine it at its two extreme ends—its beginning and its end—At the one end stood his doctrine of *Karm*, at the other *Nirvan*. An inquiry into the doctrine of *Karm* is a part of the Law of causality. The law of causality inquires into the causes of this great cluster of phenomena we call life, of this great congerie of worlds, we call the universe. We have sensations, that we know. But how are these sensations produced? And where do they come from and whither do they go?

(1) *Milinda* II-3-7; 35 S. B. E. 89, 90.

How does this great machine of the universe and of man, work? Is it an ante-notion or is there some one behind to control it? Does it move by chance or follow any process of cause and effect. That is the next question. And this is the great solution, "He who describes origin by way of cause, he discerns the Dhamm, he discerns origin by way of cause."<sup>(1)</sup>

Now when Buddh examined this question of causation of things there were several theories in the field which he had adverted to and combated. There was first the school of Ajivaks, founded by Makkhali Goshal, whose view of the universe and all it holds was that it was "a jumble of things, a fortuitous concourse of atoms," working on no plan, following no system, and tending to no definable end. "Beings become depraved without cause or condition; they become morally pure also without cause. Our attainments do not depend on effort or action, either of our own or of others. There is no human energy or power that is effective. All things that have life, creatures and souls, are without inherent force. They are bent this way and that by the necessity of their specific nature." This is the doctrine of the slope by which Nagasen explained the course of thought. This is akin to the Nihilism of Ajit, founder of the Hair-garment school who denied that saints could probe any further than sinners into the mysteries of life, which began when it began and will end when it does. There never was a past life and there never can be a future life; and the good and evil deeds of this life are neither the result of the one nor can influence the other.

Buddh took the middle path and while he could not say with Ajivak that human conduct has no effect upon our lives nor could he support the abject Nihilism of Ajit of whom he said: "Just as, Bhikkhus, of all kinds of woven robes, a hair garment is least desirable, cold in cold weather, hot in the heat, unpleasant to the touch, so of all the many assertions by recluses, the Makkhali theory is the most undesirable. He, foolish man, believes and declares there is no effective action

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(1) *Majjhima-Nikay*, I—191; *Digha*, III—275,

(going on), no resultant action (the result of effective action), no indwelling energy. Herein he rejects that which all past Buddhs have declared, all future Buddhs will declare, and which I now the Buddh declare, I, even I declare that there is effective action, resultant action, indwelling energy"(1).

But Buddh thought that an inquiry into it would take us back too far. So when Malunk asked him whether the existence of the world is eternal or non-eternal, he made him no reply; because he held it to be an inquiry that tended to no profit,(2) and when a Jain Bhikkhu questioned him, he gave a similar reply: "Put aside these questions of the beginning and the hereafter. I will teach you the Dhamm that being present, this becomes; from the arising of that, this arises. That being absent, this does not become; from the cessation of that, this ceases"(3). In short he was then concerned with the immediate cause and not the final cause, and its system and method: "And what house-father, is this Aryan(4) method, of which one who is fit to attain the highest had by insight well seen and well penetrated?"

"This: that the Aryan disciple well and thoroughly attends to the law of causation, namely: "That being present, this becomes; because that arises, this arises etc."(5)

So far the Buddhist logic is flawless and perfect and cannot be improved upon. But the moment he goes into the causality of life, bearing in mind its uncertainties, and inequalities, also the fact that the wise suffer while the wicked ones prosper, he jumps to the conclusion that it is all *Karm* or Fate, or the effect of previous actions. And by one stroke, he decides both the past and the future of human actions. It should also be noted that in his analysis of the human mind, Buddh was dealing with a problem of his ratiocination and is, therefore, strictly logical. He correctly applies that method so far as it took him to the door of causation. He then immediately converts his psychological problem into an ethical one, and

(1) *Anguttara Nikay*, I-286

(2) Hardy--*Manual of Buddhism*, 375.

(3) *Majjhima Nikay Sutta* 79.

(4) "Aryan." "good", "true" used by

the Aryans in the same sense as Christians use "christian" for truthfulness.

(5) *Samyutta Nikay*, V. 288.

his inquiry into the cause, instead of being reasoned out, is at once stated in the form of a dogma—a dogma of which he was not the author, but which he had borrowed from the Brahmanical philosophy. And as he is dogmatic in his assertion of cause, he is equally dogmatic in his assertion of its effect, immediate and final. The fact is that at this stage he had abandoned his logic and closed the eye of reason which he exhorted his disciples to keep ever open.

And what is the chain of causes ? It is his wheel of law and is thus stated :—

*Previous Birth.*

- (1) From ignorance comes action.
- (2) From action, consciousness.
- (3) From consciousness, re-birth.

*Present Life.*

- (4) From that new consciousness, name and (corporeal) form.
- (5) From name and (corporeal) form, the six fields, *i.e.*, the fields of sensation (*i.e.*, the six senses including the mind and their objects).
- (6) From the six fields, the contact.
- (7) From contact, sensation.
- (8) From sensation, desire (*lit. Trishna*—Thirst.)
- (9) From desire, clinging to existence (*Upādan*).
- (10) From clinging to existence, being (*Bhav* “to be”).

*Future Life.*

- (11) From being, re-birth.
- (12) From re-birth, old age and death, pain, and lamentation, suffering, anxiety and suffering.

This is then his catena of causes. Now let us understand the root cause,—Ignorance. What does it mean ? It is explained by Buddha to mean ignorance of the four sacred truths. These are explained by Sariputra as follows :—“ Not to know suffering, friend, not to know the origin of suffering, not to know



the extinction of suffering: this, O friend, is called Ignorance..... Not seeing the four sacred truths as they are, I have wandered on the long path from one birth to another, now have I seen them: the current of being is stemmed. This root of suffering is destroyed there is henceforward no re-birth”(1) Ignorance being then the compendious expression for ignorance of suffering and its fourfold aspects, it begets *action*. What is action then? It is explained by Buddha himself in the following words: “In this monk, O disciples, who thus guards himself and rules his consciousness, who is immovably intent thereon in holy effort and is steadfast in self-culture, there arises a sensation of pleasure. Then he knows as follows: ‘In me has arisen this pleasurable sensation, this has arisen from a cause, not without a cause. Where lies this cause? It lies in this body of mine. But this body of mine is impermanent, has become (or been formed), been produced by causes. A pleasurable sensation, the cause of which lies in the impermanent, originated, cause-produced body, how can it be permanent?’ Thus as well with regard to the body as to the pleasurable sensation, he commits himself to the contemplation of impermanence, transitoriness, evanescence, renunciation, cessation, resignation. While he commits himself to the contemplation of impermanence etc., as well with regard to the body as to the pleasurable sensation, he desists from all yearning or propensity based on the body and on pleasurable sensation.”

And then again “my action is my possession, my action is my inheritance, my action is the womb which bears me. My action is the race to which I am akin, my action is my refuge.”(2) What appears to a man to be his body is in truth ‘the actions of his past state, which then assuming a form realized through his endeavour, has become endowed with a tangible existence.’”(3)

Now as ignorance has a moral side so has action. It becomes clear from the following explanation: “It happens, my disciples, that a monk, endowed with faith, endowed

(1) *M. V.* VI—29.

(2) *Anguttara Nikaya*

(3) *Samyutta Nikaya I. Joe “The.”*

with righteousness, endowed with resignation, with wisdom, communes thus with himself: 'Now then, could I, when my body is dissolved in death, obtain re-birth in a powerful princely family.' He thinks this thought, dwells on this thought, cherishes this thought. These actions (*Sankhars*) and internal conditions (*Vihars*), which he has thus cherished within him and fostered, lead to his re-birth in such an existence. This, disciples, is the avenue, this the path, which leads to re-birth in such an existence."<sup>(1)</sup> Actions are, therefore, our masters, and they are controlled by desires. If a person reflects a sinless state of deliverance in action and in knowledge even in this present life, he will "by the destruction of sinful existence," discover and behold for himself the sinless state of deliverance in action and in knowledge even in this present life, and will find in it his abode. Such a person will never be re-born."

We have, then, here the sum-total of the Buddhist law of causation. A man is born as a result of his past actions. If these actions are good and virtuous, the same law of causation which gave him birth, will prevent his re-birth. If, however, his actions are not virtuous, he will be subject to re-birth, assuming the higher or lower form of life according to his actions. This is the wheel of law: "The chain or wheel of the twelve bases" and the law of *Karm*.

One criticism this doctrine lends itself to, is that it postulates the continuity of self,—the identity of that consciousness which, for convenience, the Buddhist designates the "Ego." Another thing is that the four Noble Truths only take note of human suffering and assume that life is a suffering and nothing else; and that all good men wish that they were never born. Buddh would, of course, say all good men do so wish and those who don't are not good men. They are rooted to ignorance, because they have still to realize the four sacred truths. It is just here where logic fails and religion begins.

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(1) *Sankharappaki Sutta*.

The Buddhists deduce three stages from their "Twelve Bases" categorized above. The first two relate to the past life. A man's ignorance in that life caused action and action, conception and consciousness; then follow the eight stages of the present life; while the last two refer to the future re-birth. The distinction is surely artificial, and the several heads might easily be reduced. But they are the recognized "Twelve Bases of the wheel or chain," of the Buddhist *Dhamm* and are the corner-stone of their creed,—second only in importance and sacredness to the four sacred truths already set out.

We have so far dealt with consciousness, its root and subsidiary causes. We have next to turn to the doctrine of re-births and Nirvan and the path leading up to them, which occupy so large a space in the canonical law as to deserve a separate chapter.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE PATH TO NIRVAN.

#### I

#### *What is Nirvan ?*

From the foregoing discussion, it is clear that all the ills of life—past, present and future are due to one supreme cause;—ignorance of the four sacred Truths and that if one could master them, then life should be free from the further perils of re-birth; and the self of man would obtain eternal repose in Nirvan—which is the final goal of existence and which all beings should strive for.

This raises the question—what is Nirvan and how to attain it? As out of the two, one is more interested in the prize before he sets about trying to win it, it is just as well to inquire here the nature and description of Nirvan for which Buddhism calls for a life-long sacrifice. Nirvan is a Sanskrit word, and means “extinguished,” as a lamp or fire. In the Mahabharat it is used to denote the liberation of the soul from the body and its re-union with the Supreme Spirit.<sup>(1)</sup> Both in the Kiratarjuniya<sup>(2)</sup> and in the Raghuvansh<sup>(3)</sup> it is used to connote annihilation, or total extinction of individual or worldly existence, but as also implying the continuity of consciousness accompanied by perpetual calm, repose, satisfaction or pleasure, as implying the highest felicity and supreme bliss.

In the *Dhammapad* it is used in at least three senses (a) as descriptive of a mental state even in this life; (b) as the state of immortality after this life; and (c) as a place which is no other than Heaven. That it is something distinct from heaven is indicated in the *Dhammapad* where it is said: “Some people are born again; evil-doers go to hell; righteous

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(1) *Mahabharat*, 2.

(2) *Kiratarjuniya*, 11-69; 18-39.

(3) *Raghuvansh*, XII-1-5.

people go to heaven; those who are free from all worldly desires attain Nirvan.”<sup>(1)</sup> Now Nirvan is not a place for the repose of souls like a paradise. It is not a heaven for the enjoyment of eternal bliss, it is not even a mental state attainable after death, since Nirvan may be attained equally by a person in this life. “Hunger is the worst of diseases; the elements of the body, the greatest evil; if one knows this truly, that is Nirvan, the highest happiness.”<sup>(2)</sup> “Health is the greatest of gifts, contentedness, the best riches; trust is the best of relationship, Nirvan the highest happiness.”<sup>(3)</sup> But in the very same suttra we find the term used in a different sense as descriptive of immortality and a heaven. “As soon as he (the Bhikkhu) has considered the origin and destruction of elements (*khandas*) of the body, he finds happiness and joy which belongs to those who know the immortal (Nirvan).”<sup>(4)</sup> Then again: “The sages who injure no body, and who always control their body, they will go to the unchangeable place (Nirvan), where, if they have gone, they will suffer no more.”<sup>(5)</sup> “A wise and well-behaved man who knows the meaning of this, should quickly clear the way that leads to Nirvan.”<sup>(6)</sup> “The Bhikkhu who believes with kindness, who is happy in the doctrine of Buddh, will reach the quiet place (Nirvan), happiness arising from the cessation of natural inclinations.”<sup>(7)</sup> “The Bhikkhu full of delight, who is happy in the doctrine of Buddh will reach the quiet place (Nirvan), happiness consisting in the cessation of natural inclinations.”<sup>(8)</sup>

It appears that the Buddhist theory of Nirvan has passed through several stages of evolution, though it is by no means clear whether annihilation preceded the supreme bliss or the latter preceded the former. Professor Max Muller upholds the latter view,<sup>(9)</sup> but others including Dr. Oldenberg maintain the former.<sup>(10)</sup> It appears that in the earliest teachings, of which records are available, Buddh implied, if he did not

(1) *Dhammapad*, IX-126; 10 S.B.E. 35.

(2) *Ib.* XV-203; 10 S.B.E. 55.

(3) *Ib.* XV-204; 10 S.B.E. 56.

(4) *Ib.* XXV-374; 10 S.B.E. 88.

(5) *Ib.* XV-225; 10 S.B.E. 59.

(6) *Ib.* XX-289; 10 S.B.E. 70.

(7) *Dhammapad* XXV-368; 10 S.B.E. 87.

(8) *Ib.* XXV-381; 10 S.B.E. 89.

(9) *Intro. Roger's Buddhaghosh—Parables XXXIX seq.*

(10) *Buddhism* 267-272.

express it, that it was the final extinction of life without residuum which could not sprout into a new life. "The body of the Perfect One, O disciples, is cut off from the stream of becoming. As long as his body subsists, so long will gods and men see him ; if his body be dissolved, his life runs out, gods and men shall no more behold him." <sup>(1)</sup> "Dissolved is the body, extinct is perception ; the sensations have all vanished away. The actions have found their repose : the consciousness has sunk to its rest." <sup>(2)</sup> "Where there is heat, coolness is also found, so also where there is the three-fold fire—the fire of love, hate and infatuation—the extinction of the fire (Nirvan) must be sought". <sup>(3)</sup> And there are other passages which throw no clear light on the subject. Some of them are clearly poetical ;—as for instance, his sermon at Gaya where he speaks : "Everything, O Bhikkhus, is in flames. And what is in flames ? Everything, with the fire of lust, of ignorance, with the anxieties of birth, decay, death, grief, lamentation, suffering, dejection, and despair....Becoming weary of all that, he divests himself of passion ; by the absence of passion he is made free ; when he is free, he becomes aware that he is free ; and he realizes that re-birth is exhausted ; that holiness is completed ; that duty is fulfilled ; and that there is no further return to this world." <sup>(4)</sup> This is Nirvan in the first sense ; and there are passages which support it in the second sense. But these and such passages do not go far enough to describe the state, or condition or place to which the Buddhist looks forward to as his ultimate goal.

This ambiguity continues to pervade the doctrine even upto the age of King Menander (reigned 140—115, 110 B.C.) whose questions on the subject elicited from the sage Nagsen replies which may now be examined. Being questioned about Nirvan he says in one place that it was a condition of the mind and he explains : "Nirvan exists, O King. And it is perceptible to the mind. By means of his pure heart, refined and straight, free from obstacles, free from low cravings,

(1) *Bhanuñjal Sutta* (end) cited per Oldenberg *Buddhism* 200.

(2) *Udan.*

(3) *Buddhvamsa* ; cf. *M.V.* 1-21-24 ; 13 S.B. E. 134, 135.

(4) *M. V.* 1-21-2-4 ; 13 S.B.E. 134, 135.

that disciple of the Noble One, who has fully attained, can see Nirvan."

K. "Then what Sir, is Nirvan? Such a Nirvan (I mean) as can be explained by similies. Convince me by argument how far the fact of its existence can be explained by similies?"

N. "Is there such a thing, O King, as wind?"

K. "Yes, of course."

N. "Show it to me then, I pray you, O King, whether by its colour, or its form, whether as thin or thick, or short or long!"

K. "But wind, Nagsen, cannot be pointed out in that way. It is not of such a nature that it can be taken into the hand or squeezed. But it exists all the same."

N. "If you can't show me the wind, then there can't be such a thing."

K. "But I know there is, Nagsen. That wind exists, I am convinced, though I cannot show it to you."

N. "Well, just so, O King, does Nirvan exist, though it cannot be shown to you in colour or in form."

K. "Very good, Nagsen! This is so, and I accept it as you say. <sup>(1)</sup>"

According to Nagsen, Nirvan is only a state of the mind; and as he later pointed out, it is all bliss, and there is no intermingling of pain in it. <sup>(2)</sup> It is the dawn of a higher wisdom when man sees truly the vanity of life and all things in it. It is that mental state of composure, when having realized the true state of the worldly apperceptions, the mind feels an inward glow in its own light which has come from the dispelling of ignorance. "Those who are in quest of Nirvan, afflict their minds and bodies, it is true, restrain themselves in standing, walking, sitting, lying and in food,

<sup>(1)</sup> *Milinda* IV - 7-17; 36 S. B. E. 106, 107.

<sup>(2)</sup> *ib.* IV - 8 58; 36 S. B. E. 182-185.

suppress their sleep, keep their senses in subjection, abandon their very body and their life. But it is after they have thus, in pain, sought after Nirvan that they enjoy the Nirvan which is bliss unalloyed—as teachers do, the bliss of knowledge. Thus is it, O King, that Nirvan is all bliss ; and there is no pain mingled with it. For Nirvan is one thing, and the pain another.” (1)

“ And if you ask— ‘ How Nirvan is to be known?’—it is by freedom from distress and danger, by confidence, by peace, by calm, by bliss, by happiness, by delicacy, by purity, by freshness.” (2) But as he proceeds, Nagsen converts the present mental bliss into a mental bliss after death, for he says : “ Just, O King, as a man, who, venturing into a strange land, has lost his way, on becoming aware of a path, free from jungle, that will lead him home, bounds forward along it, contented in mind, exulting and rejoicing at the thought : ‘ I have found the way at last ! ’—just so in him who perceives the insecurity of transitory births, there arises the thought : ‘ All on fire is this endless becoming, burning, and blazing ! Full of pain is it, and despair ! ’ If only one could reach a state in which there were no becoming, there would then be calm, that would be sweet, the getting rid of all these defects, the end of cravings, the absence of passion, peace, Nirvan ! And therewith does his mind leap forward into that state in which there is no becoming, and then has he found peace, then does he exult and rejoice at the thought : ‘ A refuge have I found at last ! ’ And he strives with might and main along that path, searches it out, accustoms himself thoroughly to it, to that end does he make firm his self-possession, to that end does he hold fast in effort, to that end does he remain steadfast in love (towards all beings in all the worlds), and still to that does he direct his mind again and again, until gone far beyond the transitory, he gains the Real, the highest fruit (of Arhatship). And when he has gained that, O King, the man who has ordered his life aright has realised (seen face to face) Nirvan.” (3)

(1) *Milinda*, IV—8—185.

(2) *Milinda* IV—8—196.

(3) *Milinda*—IV—81—200, 201.



This disquisition makes confusion a little worse confounded. Hitherto Nagſen was clear—at any rate, on one point, namely, that Nirvan was a state of mental beatitude, arising from knowledge. But now the circle of Nirvan is widened even to the state after life ;—which raises the question once more—what is the Buddhistic conception of future life and what place has Nirvan in it ?

These questions were put to Nagſen by the King, though, unfortunately, unconnected with the question of Nirvan. The King asked, “ Nagſen, is there any one who after death is not re-individualised ? ”

N. ‘ Some are so, and some not.

K. ‘ Who are they ? ’

N. ‘ A sinful being is re-individualised, a sinless one is not ’.

K. ‘ Will you be re-individualised.?’

N. ‘ If when I die, I die with craving for existence in my heart, yes ; but if not, no. ’ <sup>(1)</sup>

But would there be the continuity of consciousness, the preservation of the individuality, the survival of the ego ? According to Nagſen, yes, but with this difference that the consciousness in the two egos would vary. “ It is like milk, which when once taken from the cow turns after a lapse of time, first to curds, and then from curds to butter, and then from butter to ghee. <sup>(2)</sup> Now would it be right to say that the milk was the same thing as the curds, or the butter, or the ghee ?

“ Certainly not ; but they are produced out of it. ”

“ Just so, O King, is the continuity of a person or thing maintained—one comes into being, another passes away ; and the re-birth is, as it were, simultaneous. Thus neither as the same nor as another, does a man go on to the last place of his self-consciousness.” <sup>(3)</sup>

<sup>(1)</sup> *Milinda* II—6 ; 35 S.B.E. 50 ;  
*Milinda*, II-2-7 ; 35 S.B.E. 70.

<sup>(2)</sup> “ clarified butter.”

<sup>(3)</sup> *Milinda* II-2-2 ; 35 S.B.E. 64, 65,

This he explains in answer to a further question :

K. " When you speak of transmigration, Nagsen, what does that mean ?

N. " A being born here, O King, dies here. Having died here, it springs up elsewhere. Having been born there, then it dies. Having died there, it springs up elsewhere. That is meant by transmigration".

K. " Give me an illustration."

N. " It is like the case of a man who after eating a mango, should set the seed in the ground. From that a great tree would be produced and give fruit. And there would be no end to the succession, in that way, of mango trees" (2).

The cessation of these re-births is Nirvan. This was the answer to another.

" The king said : ' Is cessation Nirvan ?'

" Yes, your Majesty."

Being asked to explain how, he gives the same explanation he had given before, namely, that re-birth ceases, if there is no craving for re-birth (3). But the king might have added : What does a man care, if he is re-born or not, so long as he is not conscious of it, and since consciousness is the sole *nexus* between his present self and his future re-incarnation, what does it matter to him what and where he is born ?

This is an aspect of the question which did not trouble Nagsen or his royal questioner.

He was, however, certain that Nirvan itself is free from the law of Karm, though its author is a sport of it. " All beings, O King, who are conscious, are Karm-born, spring into existence as the result of Karm, Fire, and all things growing out of seeds, are cause-born (the result of a pre-existing material cause). The earth, and the hells, water and wind—all these are season-born (depend for their existence on seasons connected with weather). Space and Nirvan exist independently alike of Karm

(1) *Milinda* II.6-9 ; 35 S.B.E. 130,

(2) *Id.* II.4-6; 35 S.B.E. 106, 107.

and cause, and seasons. Of Nirvan, O King, it cannot be said that it is Karm-born, or has not been, or can be produced, that it is past or future or present, that it is perceptible by the eye or the nose or the ear or the tongue or by the sense of touch. But it is perceptible, O King, by the mind. By means of his pure heart, refined and straight, free from the obstacles, free from low cravings, that disciple of the Noble One who has fully attained can see Nirvan." <sup>(1)</sup>

So far then, we have made very little progress in our inquiry. We have only learnt that Nirvan is a state of mental beatitude arising out of knowledge. As such, it is an individual state of the mind, and not a receptacle for all such minds. Whatever consciousness goes to establish a man's identity is wholly lost by his death, though the effect of his conscious life somehow out-lives him and it is that inscrutable residuum which, following the remorseless law of Karm, either comes to rest in a Nirvan,—an eternal beatitude, or breaks forth into a new life with its perennial suffering and death.

But as previously suggested, this was the nebulous state of the doctrine, the centre and circumference of which were neither measured nor defined. It was the adoption of the Brahmanic doctrine of Nirvan with its central figure left out. But the leaving out of Brahm created difficulties and while it was easy to conceive of a blessed soul merging its consciousness, perhaps an *imperium in imperio* therein—as a link of its past self, it became difficult to define a mental blessedness with reference to past and future lives. Not only the absence of a central unifying spirit, but the absence of a local habitation detracted from the realization of an abstruse concept, the difficulty of which was not reduced by the elimination of even the Soul from the body of the doctrine.

It was the one drawback of the doctrine which in order to be more popular had to be further materialized; and as will be seen from what has passed before, the Mahayan school had to convert Nirvan into a pleasant paradise, where the

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(1) *Milinda* IV-7-18; 36 S.B.E. 107, 108,

souls of the emancipated Bhikkhus and lay saints would revel in the reflection of their past lives and enjoy in comparison the beatitude and peace of their self-earned immortality.

To complete the picture, not only the soul was replaced but also personal God and with him a batallion of lesser gods, and all the paraphernalia of demi-gods, saints and those who had earned their right to Nirvan, but were still lingering in the earthly region. At what stage, these changes came about—we know not, as we have nothing to fix the chronological sequence of Buddhistic thought or events; and it is a serious draw back, though inevitable. But nevertheless we have this fact to remember that Nirvan, whatever it may have been, whatever it may have become and whatever it may be—was at no time annihilation or nothingness, since annihilation is inconsistent with consciousness and Nirvan was the very essence of higher consciousness. At some stage, it became not a state but a place and that place is none other than paradise. Two *Suttras* deal with it. They are the larger and smaller *Sukhvatī Vyūha* which are the religious scriptures of the Mahayan school dominating China and Japan, in which latter country these two Suttras possess special authority. They both describe the land of bliss to which the devout and virtuous go; that destination according to the larger, being determined by merit, according to the smaller by devotion. These are amongst the discourses of Buddha, alleged to have been delivered in the last year of his life to Vaiḍeḥi, the consort of King Bimbeshwar, who was disgusted with the wickedness of her son Ajatshatru. She approached Buddha and he instructed her into the three good actions which would entitle her to be born in the land of Bliss. These passports to heaven compromise—wordly goodness, good morality and good practice. This paradise is in charge of Amitabha Buddha and Nirvan means nothing more and nothing less than the transfer of a devotee from this earth to that one, for ever.

“ After this, the blessed Anand thus spoke to the Bhagwat: ‘O Bhagwat, has that Bhikkshu Dharmakar, the noble-minded Bodhisatv, after having obtained the highest perfect knowledge, passed away, having entered Nirvan, or has he not yet

been enlightened, and does he dwell now, remain, support himself, and teach the law ?

“The Bhagwat said: ‘Not indeed, O Anand, has that Tathagat passed away, nor has he not yet come, but the Tathagat, the holy, after having obtained the highest perfect knowledge, dwells now, remains, supports himself, and teaches the law, in the western quarter, in the Buddh country, distant from this world by a hundred thousand *niyuts* of Kotis of Buddh countries, in the world which is called *Sukhvati*; <sup>(1)</sup> being called Amitabha—the Tathgat, holy and fully enlightened. He is surrounded by innumerable Bodhisatvas, and worshipped by endless Shravaks, and in possession of the endless perfection of his Buddh country. ” <sup>(2)</sup>

Here then there was a defined and definite objective. Nirvan was merely the state of bliss in paradise to which the Blessed were called, on the strength of their stock of merit. This is the third view of Nirvan; and since *Sukhvati Vyuḥ* had been composed before 252 A.D. when according to the followers of the sect of Godoshin (the sect of “Pure land”) whose chief authority that work is, its copies were taken from India to China, it may then be taken for granted that the new view must have held the field at least for many years before that date.

The denizens of this Buddhist Paradise belong to two classes. Those with full faith in their future are born to enjoy the life of Sukhvati unfettered by any restrictions: but those who have died, doubting the perfect and unfailing knowledge of Buddh, have to pass through a period of probation in the calyx of lotus, till they have amassed a stock of merit to be free to sit cross-legged in the lotus-flowers. <sup>(3)</sup>

In another Sutra it is said: “He who has entered on the path of the Bodhisatvas should thus frame his thought: All beings must be delivered by me in the perfect world of

(1) *Sukhvati* “*Sukh*”—pleasure, “*vat*”—giver of. “The land of bliss.”

(2) *Sukhvati* 11; 49 S.B.E. 27, 28.

(3) *Sukhvati* 41; 49 S.B.E. 62, 63.

Nirvan, and yet after I have thus delivered these beings, no being has been delivered". (1)

The state of immortality otherwise than in the local paradise of the Buddha is nowhere contemplated. From the foregoing, it seems clear that the Buddhist Nirvan is neither extinction nor annihilation, nor the state of spiritual beatitude in this life, but that which is attainable after death as a result of the accumulation of a sufficient stock of merit, such stock of merit being only that preached by Buddha and no other. (2)

A close study of the *Suttras* and the Buddhist scriptures generally and remembering the class of persons to whom they were addressed and who flocked to receive the new dispensation, a suggestion forces itself upon one that the two aspects of the salvation adumbrated in them may not necessarily have been divided by distance of time, and it may be that the great Teacher had always kept in view the dual aspects of his doctrine which may have formed a part of his esoteric and exoteric teachings respectively. That he could not have addressed the same words to his audience of varying mental calibre seems beyond question. Nor would his creed have been the astounding success it was, if he had offered his disciples in the outer temple the poor consolation of ending in nothing. The idea is too revolting to the human mind, even to those who though nurtured in the lap of modern science, yet hug to their bosom a belief that somehow man's personality must survive the ravages of time. To Buddha, who had consecrated his life for the alleviation of human suffering, virtue was doubtless its own reward, and it is all that his Nirvan as producing mental bliss means and could have conveyed to the adept disciples. But to the generality of his followers the bait had to be a more attractive one, not necessarily that which the Mahayan school afterwards offered; but its germ lay in the human aspiration for a longer and better life free from the troubles and turmoil of this life, in a life beyond.

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(1) *Vajrachhedik* ("The diamond-cutter"). (2) *Ib.* 8 S.B.E. 119.

One need scarcely suggest that those who took the vow must not have, if they gave the least reflection to the life they were living and the sacrifices they were to make, been drawn to the new faith without being assured of at least the hope of a better life. One of his Bhikkhus wished to put the bald doctrine of his creed to the test by suggesting suicide as the best means of shortening the sufferings. But Buddh was the first to reprimand him for his folly. This is what he said, "A brother is not, O Bhikkhus, to commit suicide, whosoever does so shall be dealt with according to the law."<sup>(1)</sup> Then asked Milinda of the sage Nagsen, "How do you reconcile this with the view that life is a suffering?" "On this ground," replied the sage: "that future births depend upon the man's actions in this; and those must be for the good of mankind."

Another crucial test was offered in the suggestion that if life is a suffering, why should not inaction mitigate it. But he was equally against inaction. "Rise! sit up, what is the use of your sleeping; to those who are sick, pierced by the sorrow (of pain) and suffering, what sleep is there?"<sup>(2)</sup>

To him the ideal life was the life of human service, of service to all sentient beings, his cosmopolitan sympathies, his abounding love for those who had fallen, and those who became sub-merged in the social order—this is proved by the fact that he chose for his disciple his own barber, enlisted in his Order fallen women, dined with them openly, refusing the more sumptuous hospitality of the head of the powerful Licchavi rulers. And never in his life did he preach or practise a creed which did not make human service the be-all and the end-all of his earthly existence. Such exalted altruism could not have been forced upon a clan or a people who had little previous preparation to appreciate or accept the policy of self-effacement and abnegation of the ordinary amenities of life. One has merely to imagine the soil in which the seed was laid, the hostile elements by which it was surrounded, to conclude that the Nirvan he had foreshadowed could never have been an

(1) *Milinda*, 14-13; 35 S.B.E. 273-278

*Kulvagga*, 10--1; 10 S.B.E. 54.

absorption into Nothing, an annihilation of all-gathering hopes, with the only prospect held out that when the grave closed over the sufferer it closed his life-story for ever, and there was nothing left to gain, because there was nothing left to preserve. Such was indeed the doctrine of Ajit, the hair-attired ascetic, whom he heartily denounced. He could never have told his Bhikkhus that what he was offering was the same thing in another guise. Nor was he enamoured of the Sankhya doctrine. He had early in his career met its doctors and found them wanting. His was a creed which revolted against inaction. His was a mission of human service. His was the ideal of the Great Renunciation. Was it ever possible without a return? He had striven for and succeeded in moving the masses to accept his Gospel.

If the destiny to which he drew his adherents was no better than that in Hinduism, it would have sufficed to kill his movement at its very inception. His Nirvan must then have been more attractive even to the lay mind. People do not readily forsake their selfish instincts merely to join a new cause, least of all the Indian who was till then wholly uninured to the call of social service. The Indian's creed was the creed to hie from society to the solitude of the forest or a hermitage. To him the social call had never had any meaning. Would Buddha have, even by his magnetic personality, turned the tide of human indifference to active ministering angels in other peoples' sufferings? Could he by his clarion call have made the yeoman abandon his plough, his wife and children and don the tattered rags of a life-long mendicant, without any notion of what he was doing and what his actions may bring him to? The very question seems impertinent.

Professor Max Muller seems, therefore, nearer the mark when he opines that what Buddha taught in his theory of Nirvan was not the extinction but the completion of being. It may be that the later metaphysicians have undoubtedly associated it with Nothing as its objective. But that was their conclusion, not his teaching. To him and his disciples



Nirvan was nothing more than the entry of the spirit upon its rest, an eternal beatitude, which is as highly exalted above the joys of hereafter, as it is above the joys of the transitory world. Would not, the Professor asks, a religion, which lands us at last in the Nothing, cease, to be a religion? It would no longer be what every religion ought to be, and purports to be, —a bridge from the temporal to the eternal; but it would be a delusive gangway, which suddenly breaks off and shoots a man just when he fancies he has reached the goal of the eternal, into the abyss of annihilation. <sup>(1)</sup>

Childers takes the same view in his Pali Dictionary, <sup>(2)</sup> holding that by Nirvan is meant the condition of the perfect saint, in whom the five *khandus* are still to the fore, but the desire, which chains to being, is extinct. So Rhys Davids: "What then is Nirvan which means simply going out, extinction? (it being quite clear, from what has gone before, that this cannot be the extinction of a soul). It is the extinction of that sinful, grasping condition of mind and heart which would otherwise, according to the great mystery of Karma, be the cause of renewed individual existence. That existence is to be brought about by, and runs parallel with, the growth of the opposite condition of mind and heart, and it is complete when that opposite condition is reached. Nirvan is therefore the same thing as *sinless, calm state of mind*; and if translated at all, may best perhaps be rendered 'holiness'—holiness, that is in the Buddhist sense, *perfect peace, goodness and wisdom*." <sup>(3)</sup> So Keith: "The end of the meditations of the disciple is to lead to the final intuition of the four noble truths, which brings with it the recognition that there is no chance of re-birth.

"This is the essential fact of Nirvan; the monk is freed from the intoxicants or defilements <sup>(4)</sup> of desire, of becoming, of false views, of ignorance, all appetite, all aversion, all dullness and confusion are departed; the outward form remains, it is true, while life lasts, but

<sup>(1)</sup> Intro. Roger's Buddhghosh's  
"Parables" XXXIX seq.  
<sup>(2)</sup> p.p. 267, 526.

<sup>(3)</sup> *Buddhism* (Eng. Ed.) 111, 112.  
<sup>(4)</sup> Pali—"Asav" impurity.

the essential result is achieved, and what happens to the monk when physical death sets in, cannot alter the fact ; we can understand how the Buddha was willing to rule such questionings out as inadmissible, because he had formed a conception of the *Summum bonum* as Nirvan, which provided for its being attained in his life." (1) And it gave the person who had attained it, not only mental bliss, but a wider field of intellectual and spiritual vision. " It was, while life lasted, a state of extremely marked psychic powers, conferring on the saint powers of a varied, and to western ideas, incongruous kind. The first is the power of perceiving the inter-relation of consciousness and the body ; and this leads to the second, higher fruit of the power to create a body made by, or of mind, a conception to which we owe, it may be feared, the astral body of spiritualism and other follies. Then he enjoys magic power ; he can multiply himself and become one again ; be visible or invisible, penetrate a wall as if air, or the ground as if water ; walk on water, fly like a bird in the sky, touch sun and moon, and reach in body the heaven of Brahm. " (2)

But these supernatural powers were claimed at a much later stage, and it is permissible to doubt whether they were not excrescences added on to the doctrine with the mediæval corruption of the creed.

However, it is now generally agreed that Nirvan calls for nothing more than the destruction of desire and that it is attainable even in this life. But this is its commencing stage ; does it survive death ? That it did, is supposed by numerous texts ; but it does not appear to have been a part of the original doctrine which was first conceived by what it was not. " There is, O disciples, a state where there is neither earth nor water, neither light nor air, neither infinity of space, nor infinity of reason, nor absolute void, nor the co-extinction of perception, neither this world nor that world,—both sun and moon. That, O disciples, I term neither coming, nor going, nor standing, neither death nor birth. It is without basis, without procreation, without

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(1) *Buddhist Philosophy*—128.

(2) *Ib.*,—129.

cessation: that is the end of sorrow." (1) "There is, O disciples, an unborn, unoriginated, uncreated, unformed. Were there not, O disciples, this unborn, unoriginated, uncreated, unformed, there would be no possible exit from the world of the born, originated, created, formed." (2)

Buddh himself did not go beyond this definition. When he was questioned upon its survival after death, he did not assert or deny its existence. "By leaving the matter unexplained, the Buddh allowed men to frame their own conceptions of the future of the enlightened man after death; those who entertained strong desires for some permanent form of life, even after liberation, were as entitled to cherish the hope, as were others to accept utter annihilation as the due result, and we really have no means of saying to what proportion of the disciples, either prospect would appeal; western analogies show sufficiently that there are many earnest thinkers, who believe in the reality and purpose of the universe—which the Buddh did not—and yet accept the destruction of the individual on death with satisfaction or resignation. It has, however, been urged that we cannot suppose that so able a thinker as the Buddh, was without personal convictions on such a vital issue, even though he may have deemed on good grounds that it was neither advantageous nor necessary to explain his opinions to his disciples.

"Here again, we are confronted with bare possibilities; it is quite legitimate to hold that the Buddh was a genuine agnostic, that he had studied the various systems of ideas prevalent in his day, without deriving any greater satisfaction from them than any of us to-day do from the study of modern systems, and that he had no reasoned or other conviction on the matter." (3) One thing is certain that when his inquirers asked him the question, he did not vouchsafe anything but a non-committal reply. And his renunciation of the pantheism of the Upanishads, and his familiar allusion to the flame, makes one seriously reflect whether

(1) *Udan.*  
(2) *Ib.*

(3) *Buddhist Philosophy*—63.

to his own adept pupils he had not confided his view that they need not look forward to the survival of Nirvan after death. "World and the self are one; thus shall I be after the death eternal, firm, ever-lasting, not subject to change, like the ever-lasting one; thus shall I stay, is not that, O monks, a mere complete doctrine of the fools?" (1) "As the flame blown down by the vehemence of the wind goes out, and can be named no more, even so the sage, liberated from individuality, goes out and can be named no more." (2)

This view is echoed by Dr. Oldenberg, who, on the authority of the earlier texts, holds that Buddh meant by *Nirvan* nothing else than annihilation, and that the gloss of eternity is a later doctrine. He argues that the fact that Buddh was ever non-committal as to the existence of the ego made it impossible for him to have prescribed for an eternity incompatible with it, and incomprehensible without it. He, therefore, opines that Buddh, at any rate, did not prescribe for any other Nirvan.

He meets Prof. Max Muller's argument as to the impossibility of such a religion by suggesting that what might appear impossible in the West is not equally impossible to the East. "In the sultry, dreamy stillness of India, thoughts spring and grow, otherwise than in the cool air of the West. Perhaps what is here beyond comprehension, may there be comprehensible, and if we reach a point which is to us a limit of comprehension, we shall permit much to pass and stand as incomprehensible, and await the future, which may bring us nearer the solution of the enigma." (3) The last explanation has already been met by what has been stated before. And as to the other objections, it is perfectly true that Buddh never committed himself to any pronouncement on the existence or non-existence of the ego; but the argument is purely metaphysical, and Buddh was not a metaphysician in the ordinary acceptance of the term, (4) but a religious teacher.

As stated before, his reasoning was mainly *a posteriori* and not *a priori*. He was convinced that life was a

(1) *Buddhist Philosophy* 65.

(2) *Suttanipata*, 1074; *Majjhima Nikay* I. 487.

(3) *Buddhism*—268.

(4) He despised dogmas—*Athakavagga* 16; 10 S. B. E. 166; 46 1; 10 S. B. E. 164

suffering, and he was trying to find a cure. He was prepared to go as far as it was necessary for his purposes, but he wisely turned back at a point where he found the question had ceased to be practical. For had he not said, when asked—whether the world is everlasting or limited by bounds of time? He answered: “But when any one does not understand a matter and does not know it, then a straightforward man says:—‘I do not understand that,’ ‘I do not know that.’”<sup>(1)</sup> Malunkya presses the query, whereupon he tells him plainly his inability to dispel his ignorance on that point, adding that it was no drawback to accept his teaching so far as it went. “If a person struck by a poisoned arrow were to say to the physician called in, to heal his wound, ‘I shall not allow my wound to be treated until I know who the man is by whom I have been wounded, whether he is a Kshatriya, a Brahman, a Vaishya or a Shudra,’ or if he said: ‘I shall not allow my wound to be treated, until I know what they call the man, who has wounded me, and of what family he is, whether he is tall, or small, or of middle stature, and how his weapon was made, with which he struck me,’ what would the end of the case be?—The man would die of his wound. Therefore, Malunkya putta, whatever has not been revealed by me, let that remain unrevealed, and what has been revealed, let it be revealed.”<sup>(2)</sup>

In one of his discourses, while denying the existence of soul he admits the existence of mind. A General of the Army, who was by occupation a Jain, questioned him upon the doctrine of inaction which Buddha repudiated. He was satisfied, but there was an officer among the retinue, who heard of the discourse between the Blessed One and the General, and there was some doubt left in his heart.

“This man came to the Blessed One, and said: ‘It is said, O Lord, that the Shraman Gautam denies the existence of the soul. Do they, who say so, speak the truth, or do they hear false witness against the Blessed One?’

“And the Blessed One said: ‘There is a way in which those who say so, are speaking truly of me; on the other hand,

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<sup>(1)</sup> *Kulmalunkya Ovada; Majjhima Nikaya*—1. 428.      <sup>(2)</sup> *Ib.*

there is a way in which those who say so, do not speak truly of me.'

"The Tathagat teaches that there is no self. He who says that the soul is his self, and that the self is the thinker of our thoughts and the actor of our deeds, teaches a wrong doctrine which leads to confusion and darkness.

"On the other hand, the Tathagat teaches that there is mind. He who understands by soul, mind, and says that mind exists, teaches the truth which leads to clearness and enlightenment."

The officer said: "Does then the Tathagat maintain that two things exist?—that which we perceive with our senses and that which is mental?" "Said the Blessed One: 'Verily I say unto you, your mind is mental, but that which you perceive with your senses is also mental. There is nothing within the world or without, which either is not mind or cannot become mind. There is a spirituality in all existence, and the very clay upon which we tread can be changed into children of truth.'"(1)

But this was an ambiguous reply which may or may not have satisfied the officer. To other questioners he was less committal. For instance, when the wandering monk Vachagot asked him where there was the soul (*atta*), the Blessed One was silent, and still remained silent when he repeated his question. The monk then left him, whereupon Anand asked him why he had not replied to the monk's question: He said: "If I had answered 'the ego is,' then that would have confirmed the the doctrine of the Samans and Brahmans who believe in permanence.....But if I had said 'the ego is not,' then that would have equally confirmed their doctrine."

He then added "All existences are non-ego."(2) In the same *Sutra* there is another discourse on the same subject. Another monk, Yamak had asked his great disciple Sariputra the same question, upon which Sariputra drew him to a Socratic dialogue and easily nonplussed him. But he himself vouchsafed no reply: He asks his questioner:

(1) *Carus* : 11, 130, 131.

(2) *Samyutta Nikay*—Vol. 2.

"How thinkest thou, friend Yamak,—is the Tathagat identical with the corporeal form ? <sup>(1)</sup> Dost thou hold this ?

"I do not, my friend".

"Is the Tathagat identical with the sensations, the perceptions, the Sanskars, the consciousness ? Dost thou hold this ? "

"I do not, my friend."

"How thinkest thou, friend Yamak, is the Perfect One comprised in the corporeal form ? <sup>(2)</sup> Dost thou hold this ?"

"I do not, my friend."

"Is the Perfect One separate from the corporeal form ? Dost thou hold this ? "

"I do not, my friend."

"How thinkest thou, friend Yamak, are the corporeal form, sensations, perceptions, Sanskars, and consciousness (in their aggregate) the Perfect One ? Dost thou hold this ? "

"I do not, my friend."

"Thus then, friend Yamak, even here in this world the Perfect One is not to be apprehended by thee in truth, hast thou, therefore, a right to speak, saying 'I understand, the doctrine taught by the Exalted One to be this, that a monk who is free from sin, when his body dissolves, is subject to annihilation, that he passes away, that he does not exist beyond death.'"

"Such, indeed, was hitherto, friend Sariputra, the heretical view which I ignorantly entertained. But now when I hear the venerable Sariputra expound the doctrine, the heretical view has lost its hold of me, and I have learned the doctrine". <sup>(3)</sup>

But what had the venerable Sariputra to teach ? And what had he taught the unsophisticated Yamak ? Nothing. The fact is Sariputra was as ignorant as Yamak and yet he

(1) i. e., Does Buddh's body represent his true ego.

(2) i. e., in the sensations, etc.

(3) i. e., Sensations, perceptions. Sanskars (action) and consciousness.

was afraid to confess it, which the venerable Khema, a female disciple of Buddha's had the frankness to confess. King Pasenadi of Koushal had met her as he was journeying between his two towns Saket and Savathi. He asked her: "Venerable Lady, does the Tathagat exist after death?"

"The Exalted One, O Great King, has not declared, the Perfect One exists after death."

"Then does the Perfect One not exist after death, venerable lady?"

"This also, O Great King, the Exalted One has not declared: "The Perfect One does not exist after death."

"Thus, venerable lady, the Perfect One does exist after death and at the same time does not exist after death?—Thus, venerable lady, the Perfect One neither exists after death, nor does he not exist?"

After some more talk, the venerable lady thus expresses her view:

"The great ocean is deep, immeasurable, unfathomable. So also, O Great King, if the existence of the Perfect One be measured by the predicates of the corporeal form; these predicates of the corporeal form are abolished in the Perfect One, their root is severed, they are hewn away like a palm-tree, and laid aside, so that they cannot germinate again in the future. Released, O Great King, is the Perfect One from this, that his being should be gauged by the measure of the corporeal world: he is deep, immeasurable, unfathomable as the great ocean. 'The Perfect One exists after death' this is not apposite; 'the Perfect One does not exist after death' this also is not apposite; 'the Perfect One at once exists and does not exist after death' this also is not apposite; 'the Perfect One neither does, nor does not exist after death'—this also is not apposite."

The text relates that the King had later on put the same question to Buddha himself and received word for word the same reply.





(10) The Ascetic Gautam.



We now know what is Nirvan. It is a state of mental bliss, produced by the mastery of evil desires. It is attainable in this life and its good effect does not perish with death. A person who has attained Nirvan has attained the highest excellence; he becomes free from the ordeal of re-birth, but Buddh did not say what becomes of him; the reason being that he was not sure that there was a soul and without it he could not dogmatize on the future life. But at some time or other, either he or his apostles did connect Nirvan with immortality in heaven; and it became an integral part of the Buddhist doctrine. If this view was published by Buddh, it must have been to the laity; for to his inner disciples he commended the conquest of evil desires for its own sake. It was his sole objective.

Cessation from future births being then the one overwhelmingly important quality of Nirvan, that cessation was itself subject to the law of Karm which determined whether re-births shall continue or cease. But when Vacha, a wandering monk, asked Buddh what objection he had to the theory about eternal life, "Vacha" he replied "the theory that the saint exists (or does not exist and so on) after death is a jungle, a desert, a puppet-show, a writhing, an entanglement and brings with it sorrow, anger, wrangling and agony. It does not conduce to distaste for the world, to the absence of passion, to the cessation of evil, to peace, to knowledge, to perfect enlightenment, to Nirvan. Perceiving these objections I have not adopted any of these theories." "Then has Gautam any theory of his own?" "Vacha, the Tathagat has nothing to do with theories, but this is what he knows: the nature of form, how form arises, how form perishes, the nature of perception, how it arises and how it perishes. Therefore, I say that the Tathagat is emancipated, because he has completely and entirely abandoned all imaginations, agitations and false notions about the Ego and anything pertaining to the Ego."

"But," asks Vacha, "when one who has attained his emancipation of mind dies, where is he re-born?" "Vacha,

"the word re-born does not fit the case." "Then, Gautam, he is not re-born?" To say he is not 're-born' does not fit the case, nor is it any better to say that he is both re-born and not re-born, or that he is neither re-born nor not re-born."

"Really, Gautam, I am completely bewildered, and my faith in you is gone."

"Never mind your bewilderment. This doctrine is profound and difficult. Suppose there was a fire in front of you, you would see it burning and know that its burning depended on fuel. And if it went out, you would know that it had gone out. But if some one were to ask you to which quarter has it gone, East, West, North or South, what would you say?"

"The expression does not fit the case, Gautam. For the fire depended on fuel and when the fuel is gone, it is said to be extinguished, being without nourishment."

"In just the same way, all forms by which one could predicate the existence of the saint is abandoned and uprooted like a fan palm; so that it will never grow up in future. The saint who is released from what is styled form, is deep, immeasurable, hard to fathom, like the great ocean. It does not fit the case to say either that he is re-born, or not re-born." <sup>(1)</sup>

The three formulas—the four sacred truths, the chain of causation and the eight-fold path are a compendious expression of the entire doctrine of Buddhism, though only the first two are held to be a complete statement of the creed.

## II

### *Karm and Reincarnation.*

It has often been a wonder to European scholars how Buddha was able to reconcile his stern rationalism with his theory of transmigration. They argue that Buddha never admitted, if he did not actually deny, the existence of the soul as an individual ego. But what Buddha did deny was

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(1) *Maj-Nik.*—72.

the existence of the human ego as it was understood by the Vedantist of his time and as it is understood by the western philosopher to-day. To him the individual ego had no meaning. To him, as to the modern thinker, the entire range of psychology was limited to the theory of the laws of the coming and going of the contents of consciousness. To them, as to him, there appeared nothing to justify a belief in the existence of the Soul as a non-spatial entity. To the western mind, the matter would rest there ; but it was not so to Buddh. He postulated the existence of an Ego and a Soul, but in an entirely different sense. To him, these terms connoted the existence of that subtle energy which permeated the Universe, and which came into and went out of the man without losing its own identity. To him, as to Schlegel, Nature was nothing less than the ladder of resurrection, which step by step leads upward—or rather is carried from the abyss of eternal death up to the apex of life.

The controlling force in this evolution is Karm, which, moves the Soul forward or backward according to its action. The doctrine of Karm is a purely Hindu doctrine, though it is not without its Western supporters. "The Soul" says Hume, "if immortal, existed before our birth. What is incorruptible must be ungenerable. Metempsychosis is the only system of immortality that philosophy can hearken to." So Shelley wrote: "If there is no reason to suppose that we have existed before that period at which our existence apparently commences, then there are no grounds for supposing that we shall continue to exist after our existence has apparently closed." The doctrine of Karm finds an echo in the Jewish Kabbalah. Its Zohar or the Book of Light contains the following words: "All the souls are subject to the trials of transmigration ; and men do not know which are the Most High in their regard. They do not know how many transformations and mysterious trials they must undergo."

This view was reiterated in the Book of Proverbs: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before the works of old I was set up from everlasting, or over the earth where there

were no depths. I was brought forth : when there were no foundations abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, was I brought forth, while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens I was there, when he set a compass upon the face of the depth, when he established the clouds above, when he strengthened the foundations of the deep, when he gave the sea his decree that the waters should not pass his commandment ; when he appointed the foundations of the earth—then I was by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him : and my delights were with the Son of Man<sup>(1)</sup>.”

That a belief in the doctrine of Karm was not confined to the pre-Christian divines is clear from a saying imputed to Jesus, who declared John the Baptist to be the re-incarnation of Elijah. That doctrine has often been quoted to establish the equipoise between the seeming inequalities of this life. “There is no system” wrote Disraeli, “so simple and so little repugnant to our understanding as that of metempsychosis. The pains and pleasures of this life are by this system considered as the recompense or the punishment of our actions in another state.”

What is then the law of Karm ?

Karm means “a deed”, <sup>(2)</sup> and the law of Karm simply means that a man’s future is determined by his deeds. If he had led a virtuous life, then he may or may not be born again. The doctrine postulates another doctrine,—namely that of transmigration or metempsychosis which means the transmission of the soul after death from one animal body to another. The doctrine of Karm and metempsychosis is essentially a Hindu doctrine, which Buddha adopted without caring to reconcile it with his own professed agnosticism as to the immortality of the soul and its final destination through successive re-incarnations into the Supreme Brahm. He had to work on these hypotheses, though individually he was not prepared to sub-

(1) *Proverbs*, VIII-22-31.

(2) —to do.

cribe to them ; because without them he could not evolve his own theory of Nirvan.

The doctrine of Karm applies to all sentient life, whether possessing a soul or not. It postulates the persistence of life which appears again and again in re-incarnated forms though transformed into new shapes and forms but nevertheless retaining its identity and individuality as modified by its " deeds." This is the general law of evolution, modified as to man in its application—by making his future destiny and life dependent upon the actions of his previous life. Now as the merit of these actions is determined by the moral law, it follows that the law of Karm is a moral doctrine, and as morality is a part of all religions, it follows that the doctrine of Karm becomes a purely religious dogma. It must not, however, be confounded with " Fate " which proceeds upon the assumption that man's life is arranged by the deity and is independent of the merits of his acts. It is an interruption to the normal law of causation ; while Karm follows that law and indeed explains it. Thus if a man be born blind or lame, it is because of his demerit in the past life, and if he is born to power and opulence he must have been a self-sacrificing hermit in his previous birth. Karm then proceeds on the theory that deeds are as indestructible as matter : in fact more so, since they regulate re-births. It is easy to see that Karm is nothing more than the law of retribution ; and it is as such that it finds a place in Buddhism, where Karm is held to control man's destiny. Karm is just and admits of no grace by way of intercession whatever a man soweth that shall he also reap.

According to the Buddhist theology, on dissolution of the constituent parts of the human body, there is always the survival of his thought, speech and action which combinedly assume the higher or the lower forms of life, according to their moral equivalence. This is the doctrine of re-incarnation.

It must not be confounded with the doctrine of incarnation ; since, while the one is the reproduction of impermanent life, the latter is the mere assumption of a form by the deity which has no moral quality. It is merely the self-investiture

by a divine person of the constituent elements of the nature of man. It is one of the two ways of effecting the union of God and man, either by bringing down God to man, or by elevating imperfect man to divinity. Re-incarnation is the intermediate stage and one preparatory to this union.

There is, of course, no rational or scientific background for either theory which can neither be proved nor disproved. And that is probably its sole merit.

We have now seen what Nirvan is. We have now to examine the path to it. That path is both tortuous and straight. The former is subject to Karm and re-incarnations. The latter takes one straight to Nirvan. Both paths are open to all men. It is only a question of effort. The one is necessarily slow and tedious, but must be availed of by those whose merit does not entitle them to the short-cut. This takes us to the question of Buddhist ethics which must be now explained.



## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE ONLY WAY.

Buddh has assigned his cosmogony a secondary place in his doctrine in which he regarded the practice of virtue as all in all. And Buddhism owes its ascendancy to the supreme morality of its ethics. He places in its forefront the four sacred truths, the ignorance of which is the root of all sufferings. As already stated, these four noble truths are: (1) to understand and grasp the noble truth of suffering; (2) or of the cause of suffering; (3) or of the cessation of suffering; (4) or of the path which leads to the cessation of suffering.<sup>(1)</sup>

The "noble truth of suffering" has already been explained. It lies in a desire for action and birth. Desire arises from a consciousness of self as something individual and distinct from the rest of the universe. The first truth deals with the law of *karm*—past life and its actions, virtuous and otherwise, which persist in the present life and would be perpetuated in future lives till a stage is reached when with the sublimation of the life and its elevation to Nirvan, there is the cessation of re-births and consequent sufferings and the attainment of final salvation. These then are the first three noble truths. The suffering in the past, suffering in the present, and suffering in the future lives are ever present. The last noble truth, which provides the master-key to their cessation, is the noblest of them all. Before that truth all else is secondary. This great truth deals with the general law of deliverance. It presents to the world the highest ethical ideal yet or ever conceived by man. It is an ideal of unlimited service and self-sacrifice, the measure of which is the four degrees of sanctity obtained by an Arya (*Ariyo*) or "one worthy of reverence" as distinguished from the vulgar or "*Prithvi-Jan*" that is an ordinary Buddhist who had obtained no distinction. An Arya is then an undergraduate who has

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(1) M.V. VI-29.

had some preliminary training in piety and self-control. Such training comprises the suppression, to the utmost limit—consistent with life, of the channels of sense-impressions, the cultivation of the object-world, apart from sense-pleasure,—namely, in relation to ethical and intellectual interests, and the study and regulation of the subject-world, namely, the mind. The first stage is reached when the Buddhist, be he a layman or a monk—has freed himself from the first three fetters—namely, delusion of self, doubts about the doctrine, and dependence on external rites. He is then called *Sotapanna*<sup>(1)</sup> or one who has entered the stream or on his course of Nirvan. One who has attained to this state can only be born a god or man, but not in the four lower births, i.e., either a lower animal, a demon, a ghost or a being undergoing torments in Hell.

The second stage is attained by him as soon as he has nearly, but not quite, freed himself from the first five fetters of existence; he has just one more birth on earth. He then becomes *Sakad-Agami* (*Sakrid-Agamin*).<sup>(2)</sup>

The third stage is reached when he is wholly free from the first five fetters. He will now never be re-born here, but will be re-born in a Brahm-heaven from which he will reach Nirvan. He is then called *An-Agami* ("Not coming") or "one who will not be re-born on earth."

The fourth and last stage is that of the completely freed man, who attains Arhatship in this life, and will at death be subject to no re-birth. He is free from all the ten fetters, from all attachments to existence, whether on earth or in heaven and from all recreative act-force. He has already entered Nirvan, and while still living, he is dead to the world. He is the *Jivan-mukt*—the "emancipated living man." He is *Ashekh* ("one who has nothing to learn") and by his transcendental faculties of knowledge, his vision is expanded and he becomes possessed of the inner eye, the inner ear, know-

(1) Pali—*Sotthiya*; *Shroto*—Stream or current; "*Apann*" Sanskrit "gained, required; fallen into," "one who has entered the stream."  
(2) *Sakrit*.—Once; *Agamin*—one who comes; lit: one who comes (or has to come) only once (more)—on earth.

ledge of all thoughts, the recollection of previous existences, and the extraordinary powers over matter.<sup>(1)</sup> This state is attainable both by men and women, and every one whether he be a layman or a monk, though in practice it was the summit of spirituality which a layman experienced great difficulties in reaching. Arhats are sub-divided into three classes:—(a) one who is an Arhat pure and simple; he cannot teach others the way. He corresponds to the simple graduate in the hierarchy of Buddhism; (b) above him ranks the *Pratyek-Buddh* or solitary saint who has attained perfection as a layman; (c) while the third and the highest degree is that in which he becomes a Bodhisatv previously described. The stages of spiritual evolution of the disciple are thus graduated and well-marked, and the measure of spiritual knowledge and the all-controlling subjugation of (evil) desires are well tested by the Sangh who are the Spiritual Corporation of the Order, and supervise and control the action and progress of the neophyte from his initiation to the final goal. Over and above them all, are the Buddhs who have attained perfection in learning wisdom and piety and who have, of course, already attained Nirvan. It seems that these five classes are sometimes varied. For we find in the *Sankhya Sutra* a different classification—*Sottiya* (learned in the revelation) being “whoever after having heard and understood every Dhamm in the world, whatever is wrong and whatever is blameless, is victorious, free from doubt, liberated, free from pain in every respect, him they call a *Sottiya* (learned in the revelation).”<sup>(2)</sup> “Whoever after having cut off passions and desires, is wise and does not (again) enter the womb, having driven away the three-fold sign, the mind (of lust) and who does not (again) enter time, him they call an *Ariya* (noble).”<sup>(3)</sup> “He who in this world, after having attained (the highest) gain in the charans is skilful, has always understood the Dhamm, clings to nothing, is liberated, and for whom there are no passions, he is a ‘*charanvat*’ (endowed with observances).”<sup>(4)</sup> “Whoever abstains from the action that has a painful result above

(1) Called *Riddhi* (Pali. *Iddhi*).

(2) *Sabhy Sutta* 25; 10 S. B. E. 91.

(3) *Sabhy Sutta*; 26; 10 S. B. E. 91.

(4) *Id.* 27, 10 S. B. E. 91.

and below and across and in the middle, who wanders with understanding, who has put an end to deceit, arrogance, cupidity and anger, name and form, him they call *Paribrajak* (a wandering mendicant) who has attained the highest gain."<sup>(1)</sup> And there were, of course, other academic and clerical distinctions such as *Kshetrajñ*<sup>(2)</sup> (conqueror of the regions),<sup>(3)</sup> *Kushal* (happy)<sup>(4)</sup>, *Pandit* (wise)<sup>(5)</sup> to act as incentives to higher proficiency.

To begin with, the student of the fourth noble truth has to place himself on the right path. "This, O monks, is the sacred truth of the path to the extinction of suffering; it is this sacred eight-fold path, to wit: Right Faith, Right Resolve, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Living, Right Effort, Right Thought, and Right Self-concentration. All this fabric of right rests for its foundation on three main pillars—of uprightness, self-concentration, and wisdom, which are held together by their own weight and are neither propped nor buttressed by any extraneous force or support of reward or punishments,<sup>(6)</sup> Buddh believed in self-help, and his system is essentially self-supporting: "He who speaks or acts with impure thoughts, him sorrow follows, as the wheel follows the foot of the draught-horse. He who speaks or acts with pure thoughts, him joy follows like his shadow, which does not leave him. All that we are, is the result of what we have thought; it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him, like a shadow that never leaves him."<sup>(7)</sup> They who know truth is truth and untruth is untruth, arrive at truth, and follow true desires. As rain breaks through an ill-thatched house, passion will break through an un-reflecting mind."<sup>(8)</sup>

The first lesson that the Buddhist has then to learn is to purify his mind. This view of morality presents a refreshing contrast to the Brahmanical teachings—where acts and rituals

(1) *Sabbhya Sutta*, 28; 10 S. B. E. 92.

(2) *Kshetra*—field (battle field) *Jin*—to

win.

(3) *Ib.* 16; 10 S. B. E. 89.

(4) *Ib.* 17; 10 S. B. E. 90.

(5) *Sabbhya Sutta*, 18; 10 S. B. E. 90.

(6) *Sonadand Sutta*.

(7) *Dhammapad*, 1, 2; 10 S. B. E. 3, 4.

(8) *Dhammapad*, XVIII—239; 10 S. B. E. 61.

are everything and mind nothing. The ethos of Brahmanism is self-sacrifice, that of Buddhism self-mastery. The one is the outcome of self-deception, the other of self-realization. This self-discipline is not an abstract inculcation. It is illustrated by numerous stories, allegories and parables to bring home to the novice the practice and study of a chastened mind. "Step by step, moment by moment, must he, who is wise, cleanse himself from all impurity, as the goldsmith refines silver." Buddha recognizes the presence of evil, <sup>(1)</sup> but whether it is inherent in human institutions or is a principle of the universe, he does not care to inquire into or waste his thoughts on. He takes it as existing, as certain as an eternal verity of life, and directs his disciples to keep it at arm's length. "Without a cause and unknown is the life of mortals in this world of troubles and grief and combined with pain." <sup>(2)</sup> "Knowing that this body is fragile like a jar and making his thoughts firm like a fortress, one should attack Mara <sup>(3)</sup> (the Tempter) with the weapon of knowledge; one should watch him, when conquered, and should never rest." <sup>(4)</sup> "Those who bridle their mind which travels far, moves about alone, is without a body, and hides in the chamber (of the heart) will be free from the bonds of Mara ("the Tempter.")" <sup>(5)</sup> "It is good to tame the mind, which is difficult to hold in and flighty, running wherever it listeth: a tamed mind brings happiness." <sup>(6)</sup> These exhortations apply equally to the clergy and the laity: "It is hard to leave the world (to become a friar), it is hard to enjoy the world; hard is the monastery, painful are the houses; painful it is to dwell with equals (to share every thing in common) and the itinerant mendicant is beset with pain. Therefore, let no man be an itinerant mendicant, and he will not be beset with pain. A man full of faith, if endowed with virtue and glory is respected, whatever place he may choose." <sup>(7)</sup> "Many men, whose shoulders are covered with

(1) "*Mara*"—"Death"; "*Mara*" Death personified. "King of Death," "King of Evil." See glossary.

(2) *Sutta. Sutta*, 1; 10 S. B. E. 105.

(3) "*Mara*"—"Death" "*Mara*" Death personified. "King of death;" "King of

evil."

(4) *Dhammapad*, III—40; 10 S. B. E. 14.

(5) *Ib.* III—37; 10 S. B. E. 12.

(6) *Ib.* III—35; 10 S. B. E. 12.

(7) *Ib.* XXI—302, 303, 10 S. B. E. 73

yellow gown are ill-conditioned and unrestrained; and evil-doers by their evil deeds go to hell." (1) "A grass-blade, if badly grasped, cuts the arm, badly practised asceticism leads to hell." (2) "Like a well-guarded frontier-fort, with its forces within and without, so let a man guard himself. Not a moment should escape, for they who allow a right moment to pass, suffer pain when they are in hell." (3)

The mind being purified and trained, the next step he has to take is to practise uprightness. This term is used in a special sense and defined by a series of following "don'ts," which centre round the following five main heads:—

- (1) Thou shalt not kill.
- (2) Thou shalt not commit theft.
- (3) Thou shalt not covet another man's wife.
- (4) Thou shalt not lie,
- (5) Thou shalt not drink.

These commandments are of general application (4). But in the case of monks a command of absolute chastity replaces the third commandment. The practice of social morality is the lowest rung of the ladder which the novice has to practise, and having practised, make it a habit of his life. It must feel and act unconsciously, so that the practise of these elementary virtues does not become a toil, an effort, a conscious act. "He who destroys life, who speaks untruth, who in the world takes what is not given him, who goes to another man's wife, and the man who gives himself to drinking, intoxicating liquors,—he even in this world digs up his own root." (5)

The Bhikkhus, as was to be expected, are subjected to additional restrictions. In their case, the commandments are ten and not only five. They include—

- (6) Eat no food except at stated times.
- (7) Use no wreaths, ornaments or perfume.

(1) *Dhammapad.* XXIII—307; 10 S. B. E. 75.

(2) *Ib.* XXII—311; 10 S. B. E. 76.

(3) *Ib.* XXII—315, 10 S. B. E. 76.

(4) *K.V.*—23-25; 10 S. B. E. 64.

(5) *Ib.* XVIII—246, 247, 10 S. B. E. 62. It appears that these additional commandments were held equally applicable to all disciples *K.V.*—26; 10 S. B. E. 64, 65.

- (8) Use no high or broad bed, but only a mat on the ground.
- (9) Abstain from dancing, singing, music, or worldly spectacles.
- (10) Own no gold or silver of any kind, and accept none. <sup>(1)</sup>

To these was added the following.

- (1) Never think or say that your religion is the best. Never decry the religion of others.

But these, though obligatory, did not possess the same virtue as the removal of the ten fetters which Buddha exhorted his first 60 disciples to master.

These "Fetters" are—

- (1) Belief in the belief of a Self or Ego.
- (2) Doubt.
- (3) Ceremonial observances.
- (4) Lust or sensuality.
- (5) Anger.
- (6) Craving for life in a material form, either on earth or in heaven.
- (7) Longing for immaterial life in the higher heavens.
- (8) Pride.
- (9) Self-exaltation.
- (10) Ignorance (in the sense before described).

Of these those numbered 1, 3 and 4, are "wrong beliefs" which taken with "ditthi" or "wrong belief" constitute "Upādān" or a fetter of "clinging to existence."

But these are not all; we have the seven jewels of the law, reflexions and transcendental virtues which have to be practised by one, who aspires to the higher degrees. These seven jewels are: (1) the five contemplations or reflections;

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(1) *M. V.*—I—56, cf. with these the Decalogue or the Mosaic Ten commandments. *Exodus XXXIV*—14-26.

(2) the four right exertions ; (3) the four paths to supernatural power ; (4) the five moral forces ; (5) the right use of the five organs of sense ; (6) the seven limbs of knowledge ; and (7) the eight-fold path.

The five above-mentioned reflections are : (1) on the thirty-two impurities of the body <sup>(1)</sup> ; (2) on the duty of displaying love towards all beings ; (3) on compassion for all who suffer ; (4) on rejoicing with all who rejoice ; (5) on absolute indifference or sorrow (6) These contemplations (*Bhavanas*) take the place of prayer ; and though only six, count as the "Seven jewels" (*Sati Pathan*). They must not be confounded with *Dhyan* or Meditation, which is the Buddhist equivalent for the Vedic *Yoge* already explained. Its practice is enjoined and is considered highly meritorious. It comprises four stages and any stage reached is sufficient to stop all re-births and translate the soul of the deceased *Dhyani* to the region of *Brahm*.

*Dhyan* means "attention" and as the term imports, it is an exercise in which the *Dhyani* fixes his mind upon some object to the exclusion of all others, so that his intense concentration produces in him a joy which launches him in *Nirvan*.

In the second stage the object of concentration is the self ; and in the third stage, the joy disappears but only perfect serenity remains, while in the fourth stage even serenity disappears and the *Dhyani* gets into a trance, oblivious to all sense of sound and touch, lifting his mind to a transcendental state in which the latent energy becomes released and the *Dhyani* is able to perform miracles. That state is the state of *Samadhi* in which *Dhyani*, even if buried alive, does not die.

When by constant practice the devotee has brought all his senses under his perfect control, he becomes eligible for the highest prize of Arhatship and, indeed, Buddhhood. He has then practised the six (really ten) recognized virtues called

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(1) Cf. *Vijai Sutta*, 10 S. B. E. (Pt. 2), 32, 33 e.g., mucus, saliva, perspiration lymph, blood, bile, fat, stench and excrements.



*Paramitas* ("leading to the other shore"). These virtues which the Arhat as well as the Bodhisatv has to practise are:—

- (1) The generosity and charity (*Dan*) to all who ask or need, even to the length of sacrificing one's life and limb for others. This is the prime virtue.
- (2) Practice of virtue or moral conduct (*Sila*).
- (3) Patience and tolerance (*Shanti*).
- (4) Fortitude or courage (*Virya*—bravery).
- (5) Suppression of evil desires (*Nishkamya*—work or service without expecting reward).
- (6) Transcendental wisdom (*Prajna-panna*).
- (7) Truth (*Satya*).
- (8) Steadfastness (*Adhishthan*—unwavering mind).
- (9) Love and kindness (*Maitri*)
- (10) Composure (*Upeksha*).

Many of them, however, e.g., those numbered 4, 5, 7, 8 and 10 are later additions.

Lest these abstract rules should become unintelligible, a vast and varied literature gives minute details of how all these several virtues are exemplified in practice. No one knew better than Buddh that abstract aphorisms do not count for much and he had himself in his discourses and discussions emphasized the necessity of concrete examples. He only knew too well that an ounce of practice is worth more than a pound of precept. He knew that humanity at large is less moved by abstract theories than by living examples. His own life was an illustration of his precepts, which were varied and enriched by the stories of his previous births. Thus, to the devout there was set an example of what a man could do, and had in fact done, and which he could therefore do and strive to achieve. These stories known as the *Jaataks* are all fables put into the mouth of Buddh who is said to have recounted them to his disciples. They illustrate every virtue before categorised; so that the believer has before him not only the precepts, but

the actual examples of their realization in practice. "I have taught the truth which is excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle, and excellent in the end: it is glorious in its spirit and glorious in its letter. But simple as it is, the people cannot understand it. I must speak to them in their own language. I must adapt my thoughts to their thoughts. They are like children, and love to hear tales. Therefore, I will tell them stories to explain the glory of the Dharma. If they cannot grasp the truth in the abstract arguments, by which I have reached it, they may nevertheless come to understand it, if it is illustrated in parables."

These open up a wide field of literature which makes Buddhism a social servant, the incomparable morality of which has placed that religion in the forefront of all the ethical systems of the world. It is the subject of the next chapter.

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE SECRET DOCTRINE.

In the preceding pages the life and teachings of Gautam Buddha have been presented as they appear to the lay mind. But Buddhism has always had an esoteric side ; and that side places Buddhist metaphysics in a plane higher and nobler than the base materialism to which it is held associated. That higher teaching will not be readily perceived by any one who reads only what Buddha spoke in his popular discourses addressed to the uninitiated. These have often been quoted to shew that Buddha denied the existence of God, which however, he never did. He is stated to have denied the existence of the soul ; to have preached pessimism ; to have exhorted his disciples to accumulate merit by the intensive cultivation of egoism, and all for the poor satisfaction of compassing their own annihilation hereafter and for ever. That is one view but a superficial view which, if true, would never have gained him a single adherent, let alone half the humanity. The fact is that Buddha had to preach his creed to the savant and the savage alike, and the savants and savages alike followed his creed. We have at the one end the highly thoughtful Brahman and the sages who have devoted their lives to the study of the single question of life and death, and at the other, those, who, living on the slopes of the Himalayan mountains, have never given their thoughts to anything beyond the sheep they tend and the cattle they browse, from whom their little lives are scarcely distinguishable. That Buddhism should have equally appealed to them shows the simplicity and attractiveness of his doctrine. That it has for over two thousand years engrossed the best minds of the East and has materially influenced the Western thought— shews that there must be in the plain narrative of his doctrine an elasticity and a hidden meaning which only a closer study of his teachings can reveal. Taking the five questions, as far as possible, in their order

(1) The Soul, (2) God, (3) Nihilism, (4) Egoism, (5) and Pessimism, let us see if there is anything in his system which rises above the plain surroundings of his teaching.

And first as to his view of God: It has been stated before, that as often as he was questioned on the subject, he evaded a categorical reply. But who were his questioners? Only those who had either a low concept about God or no concept at all. And what does the ordinary man know, or can know about Him? It has been stated before, that the very limitations upon the human mind created the use of terms and expressions necessarily limited and applicable only to objects and things of which man is conscious. That consciousness is necessarily limited, indeed, so limited that human mind is unable to stretch its imagination beyond conceiving of God as only a glorified man. He, who wishes to have the best knowledge of God, must then expand his mind so that it rises above the things earthly, to perceive things eternal. He cannot describe them in human language. He can only feel Him; and then only when he has made his mind clear of human consciousness, because that consciousness ever drags him down to mundane analogies.

In fact, the Soul that becomes conscious of the Supreme Soul is not the human Ego that operates on the physical plane. The Ego is only a beam of light from that orb to which the presence of matter is an impediment. Man in his pride assumes that he alone possesses the Soul, which animals and the lower forms of life do not. The fact is that no life is possible without the Soul which is possessed by all alike, only that it varies in its measure and degree. Man upon earth has the highest form of the individual Soul, but he is not the limit of creation. As he rises in the scale of spirituality, he has to discard the human frame in which his larger soul feels cramped. When therefore the cessation of re-births is aimed at, it is not because rebirths are *per se* undesirable, but because the Soul, which has outgrown its limitations, seeks a wider sphere for its activity. It is like a child to whom the coat has become too small with the growth of his body. As he needs

a larger garment so the larger Soul needs a larger frame; and as such frame is unattainable in this world which is subject to re-births, there must be the cessation of re-births.

This is all that Nirvan means and can mean. It means that the human Soul has outgrown the receptacle in which it dwelt. And if you ask what reasons have you in support of your theory, Buddh replies that it all depends upon the "You". If you are an ordinary mortal, he has nothing by which to demonstrate his theory to you; since your mental apparatus is too crude to perceive it, nor has he the language in which to describe it to you. He has, however, this to say to you—that he is prepared to improve your mental apparatus and for that purpose he asks you to follow his esoteric teaching. If and when you have mastered it, you will then ask no questions; for you will not then have any questions to ask. Your apparatus being in order, you will answer that question for yourself. You will then begin to feel and perceive the larger life that will open up before you. You will have transcended the limited horizon of your own apperception. You will have then seen with your mind's eye your oneness with that universal Soul of which you have only a dim consciousness at times. It is a flickering light which comes and goes. It will become steadier as your mind expands, and when it has sufficiently expanded, you will need no other light to shew you the way.

The "Ego", then, which man thinks of, is the<sup>4</sup> Ego the reality of which Buddh denies. It is the fetter of individuality, considered as the human Ego, which considers a mere sensation, perception, predisposition, in one word, consciousness as the only "Ego" whereas it is no Ego at all. The "Ego" which men speak of is one thing; the "Ego" which Buddh teaches you to think of is quite another.

Without this Ego, Nirvan is inconceivable. The two Egos are not the same and yet they are not distinct. They are like the cocoanut fruit of which there is the shell and the kernel within; the shell is the individual "Ego" which receives the direct impact of sensations, the kernel is the larger Ego which

equally receives these impacts, though not directly; but nevertheless it does receive them and is influenced by their pressure. Both the Egos are subject to the moral law, the only law to which they can be subject. It is like a man who has to feed on roots, because there is nothing else to feed on.

The law of selflessness and self-discipline is obviously the right moral law because it appeals to the best instinct of man. The Soul that follows this law becomes purified and refined; and he, whose Soul has vanquished Self and mastered his desires, has already entered that blissful state of the mind when the blows and buffets of human craving disturb it not, when carnal cares and human vanities concern it not: when, freed from the trammels of Self and thralldom of passions, the individual Soul, emancipated from its prison-house of wordly wants, withdraws itself into its shell, rejoining the greater Soul within, refreshing and re-invigorating it, and producing in the mind a feeling of freedom and release from cares, directing its undisturbed attention to higher things. It is Nirvan, the state of supreme mental bliss. It is possible in this very life; but, since its union with the body is an ever-present danger of its debasement, the Nirvan is not final till the soul obtains its final liberation from the body.

After this, the Soul is completely emancipated and enters upon a higher plane of consciousness. It does not forget its past, because the past is only an experience, which it has no reason to remember or forget, but it can recall it whenever it pleases, much as the child can, if it so desires, recall the old coat in which it ran about till it had to be thrown away.

Nirvan is then only a higher state of human existence, with the infirmities of human life eliminated. When attained in life, it does not involve the destruction of self, though it arises only upon the suppression of selfishness. After death, there is no selfishness, because there is no individuality in the sense we understand it. The difference between "Mine" and "Thine" is as between limited creatures. It has no meaning, when there are no creatures at all to reckon with, when the so-called individual Soul has joined the greater Soul and the

two together have joined the universal Soul. The three were really at no time divided, but, one of them--the individual Soul--was merely indulging in a sort of sport during an infinitesimal part of its eternal existence.

We have now done with the ontological doctrine of God, the Soul and Nirvan. There remain the questions of the Buddhist pessimism and egoism. First, as to its pessimism. Buddhism is not pessimistic about the eventual destiny of man. It is not pessimistic about man's duty in life. What is it then pessimistic about? Only this--that life is transitory and man's participation in it involves misery and suffering brought about by man's struggle for Self--his so-called Self. The struggle is the outcome of his ignorance of the fact that everything in the world is impermanent, and that there is no such thing as "Self" at all. To the Vedantist the impermanence of the world was proof of its unreality: to Buddh it was the cause of its sorrow. He saw that man in his ignorance of his own Self,—of its true nature and purpose, nourished the body taking it to be real and lasting, but forgot to minister to the Soul which he degraded to become the handmaid of the body. Buddh saw that much of the misery of the world was inherent in its very constitution. He equally saw that added to it there was a great deal of preventible misery of which man's selfishness was the root cause. As regards the former, the only escape from it is the escape from the world: as regards the latter, it could be avoided if man would only subdue his selfish instinct; but this he would never do so long as he did not realize that it was the product of his ignorance. The ethos of the Vedantist is self-sacrifice, that of Buddhism self-mastery. The one is the outcome of self-deception, the other of self-realization.

But would the mere dispelling of ignorance eradicate his selfishness? Buddh knew only too well that it would not. His doctrine coupled with self-effacement the pleasure of Nirvan. It was not a mere sugar-coated pill but a reality as previously explained. The chastening of Self, its purification and refinement as leading to Nirvan, could not be described as either Egoistic or Hedonic. Nor could it be fairly described as ultra-stoical in that

it bade men to be virtuous because virtue was its own reward. It was so in a sense; but there was also its final reward.

Buddh did not teach men to wholly ignore their own individuality. Nor did he teach them to forget themselves. He did not teach men to love their neighbours more than themselves. But he did teach them to love them as much, and remember that they and their neighbours were all one but only temporarily divided, or seemingly so, by the blind wall of ap-perception. If this is the secret doctrine, let us next examine how far it is supported or contradicted by his public teaching.

Those who ascribe to him the denial of the Soul quote several instances, that when asked questions about eternal life, he evaded a straight reply. Dr. Oldenberg has devoted much space to this question, though Rhys Davids supports his conclusion by adopt-ing another line of ratiocination. <sup>(1)</sup> In the *Dhamm Sangani*, a manual of Buddhist Psychology in use since the fourth century B.C., man is described as an assemblage of different properties or qualities, none of which corresponds to the Hindu or modern notion of Soul. Referring to them, Buddh said: "Mendicants, in whatever way the different teachers <sup>(2)</sup> regard the Soul, they think it is the five *khandas* <sup>(3)</sup> or one of the five. Thus, mendicants, the unlearned, unconverted man who does not associate either with the converted or the holy, or understand their law, or live according to it,—such a man regards the Soul either as identical with, or as possessing, or as containing or as residing in the material properties (*rupe*), or as identical with, or as pos-sessing, or as containing, or as residing in sensation (*Veđāna*). <sup>(4)</sup> By regarding Soul in one of these twenty ways, he gets the idea, 'I am'. Then there are the five organs of sense, and mind, and qualities, and ignorance. From sensation (produced by contact and ignorance,) the sensual, unlearned man derives the notions 'I am', 'I exist'; 'I shall be', 'I shall not be'; 'I shall or shall not have material qualities'; 'I shall or shall not be without ideas'. <sup>(5)</sup> But now, mendicants, the learned

(1) *Buddhism* 89-95.

(2) *Samāns* and *Brahmans*.

(3) *Khandas* or divisions of the qualities of sentient beings elaborately described,

see *Glossary*.

(4) See *Glossary*.

(5) And so on of each of the three *Khandas*, i.e., ideas, propensities, and mind.



disciple of the converted, having the same five organs of sense, has got rid of ignorance and acquired wisdom; and, therefore, by reason of the absence of ignorance and the rise of wisdom the ideas 'I am' (&c as above) do not occur to him." (1)

This is regarded as *Shakkyā Ditti* or the heresy of individuality—a delusion which must be abandoned at the very first stage of the Buddhist path of freedom. The other being *attavaḍḍi* or "the doctrine of Soul or Self"—which is a part of the chain of causes which lead to the origin of evil. "Buddhism" says Rhys Davids in another place, "does not solve the problem of the primary origin of all things. When Malunk asked Buddha whether the existence of the world is eternal or not eternal, he made him no reply; but the reason of this was, that it was considered by the teacher as an inquiry that tended to no profit." (2) Now it seems that the first doubt is solved by the second. In the discourse quoted, Buddha distinguishes between the learned and the unlearned man and is setting out only the views of the "unlearned, unconverted man." He points out what produces in him the illusion of Self. He was not dealing with the learned or their view of the Soul; that is to say, of those who have passed beyond the stage of those who are still struggling in the delusion of treating a mere sensation as their individuality. Then as regards Malunk, who was a quizzical stranger, Buddha was not likely to engage with him into a discussion for which he regarded his ordinary Bhikkhus as unprepared.

Rhys Davids then gives Nagasen's familiar illustration of the chariot of which he names each part which he shews is not the chariot, a term which can only apply to the aggregate—that is to say, all the parts taken together. He then adds: "As the various parts of a chariot form, when united, the chariot, so the five *khandas* when united in one body, form a being, a living existence." This, at any rate, seems wide of the mark. Nagasen was here dealing with the meaning of individuality as distinguished from the soul. Rhys Davids was aware of it, for he goes on to add that his conclusion

(1) *Khandavagga 5th Sutta.*

(2) *Majjhima I—430*; cited in Hardy's *Buddhism* 87.

"Manual of Buddhism;" R. Davids'

was supported "more clearly" from a curious passage in the *Brahmajal Sutta*, <sup>(1)</sup> which mentions the sixty-two erroneous beliefs including the fallacy that "The Soul and the world are eternal; there is no newly-existing substance; but these remain as a mountain-peak unshaken and immovable. Living beings pass away, they transmigrate; they die and are born; but these continue as being eternal." Then again—"Upon which principle, or on what account, do these mendicants and Brahmans hold the doctrine of future existence? They teach that the Soul is material, or is immaterial, or is both or neither; that is, it is finite, or infinite, or both or neither, that it will have one or many modes of consciousness, that its perceptions will be few or boundless; that it will be in a state of joy or of misery, or of neither." Then occurs the final sentence: "Mendicants, that which binds the Teacher to existence is cut off; but his body shall remain, he will be seen by gods and men; but after the termination of life, upon the dissolution of the body, neither gods nor men will see him." It is with reference to this statement that the European scholars have held, as does Rhys Davids, that Buddh categorically denied the existence of Soul. He asks: "Would it be possible in a more complete and categorical manner to deny that there is any soul—any entity, of any kind, which continues to exist, in any manner, after death?" The answer is that Gautam was all along referring to the individual "Ego," the so-called Soul, which he has described as the creature of sensations. He was not referring to the *larger soul* without which he could not reconcile his views with his established doctrine of transmigration.

This is admitted by the learned author who goes on to write: "But Gautam had not been able to give up the belief in transmigration. He, like some other seekers after truth who are at the same time deeply religious, had gradually formed his beliefs—not by working up from the simple to the complex, from the well-known to the less known, and pausing humbly where uncertainty begins,—but by gradually rejecting those parts of his earliest creed which could be proved (to his mind) to

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(1) *Āgga Nikāya* (P.T.S.)

be inconsistent with what he held to be actual fact. In such cases, every surrender causes a wrench; each stand-point is defended more strongly than the last; and the ultimate belief is not necessarily *more true* than those which have been abandoned; but only *less easily proved false*. . . . . How ever this may be, the belief was retained in Buddhism as proving a moral cause for the suffering condition of man in this birth; and as Buddhism does not acknowledge a Soul, it has to find the link of connection, the bridge between one life and another, somewhere else. In order to do this, and save the moral cause, it resorts to the desperate expedient of a mystery one of the four acknowledged mysteries of Buddhism (which are also the four points in which it is most certainly wrong) the doctrine, namely of Karm" (1)

The dialectical confusion of this reasoning is obvious. The question here is—did Buddh predicate or deny the existence of Soul? Rhys Davids started by shewing that he denied it and then winds up by shewing that he did not, because his creed was rooted on the doctrine of transmigration, which would have been inconsistent with his negation of the Soul. We are not here concerned with the sanity or soundness of his views on the law of Karm—we are directing our inquiry into the sole question whether Buddh denied the existence of Soul which outlived the dissolution of the human body. So far as Rhys Davids is concerned, his conclusion is clear that Buddh not only did not deny its existence but had constructed his whole creed upon the assumption of its continuance.

Let us next turn to Dr. Oldenberg who approached the question from another stand-point. His argument is embellished by many quotations which have already been accounted for in the preceding chapters. For the present, his argument will only be summarized as follows: (2) The Buddhist metaphysics was the very opposite of the Brahman's: "The speculation of the Brahman apprehended being in all becoming; that of the Buddhists becoming in all apparent being. In

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(1) The four points mentioned are: (1) Cosmos (*Loka*); (2) The omniscience &c. The effect of Karm; (3) The supernatural powers attained by *Idahi* (Saintship); (4) *Buddhism* 99-101.  
 (2) The size, age and first cause of the

the former case, substance without causality; in the latter, causality without substance.”<sup>(1)</sup>

Buddh refused to consider the possibility of the beginning or the end of things. To him the beginning of consciousness was the beginning of life: its end was its end: “The finite world appears in the dogmatics of Buddhism to rest wholly upon itself. Whatever we see, whatever we hear, our senses as well as the objects which are preserved to them, everything is drawn within the cycle of origination and decease; everything is only a *Dhamm*, a *sanskara* and all *Dhamms*, all *sanskars* are transitory. Whence this cycle? No matter whence; it is there, from a past beyond ken. The existence of the conditional is accepted as a given fact; thought shrinks from going back to the unconditional.”<sup>(2)</sup> Whenever his venerable disciples were questioned on the existence of the Ego, they thus invariably added; “Whether the Ego is, whether the perfect saint lives after death or not, the exalted Buddha has taught nothing.”<sup>(3)</sup> It is, however, admitted that the Bhikkhus who evaded a straight reply knew more than they were prepared to disclose. “If Buddha” he adds “avoids the negation of the existence of the Ego, he does so in order not to shock a weak-minded hearer. Through the shirking of the question as to the existence or non-existence of the Ego, is heard the answer, to which the premises of the Buddhist teaching tended: The Ego is not: or what is equivalent, the Nirvan is annihilation.”<sup>(4)</sup> But is that the only inference possible and if it were so, what becomes of Buddha’s doctrine of transmigration and the doctrine of Karm? How is that possible, as Rhys Davids points out, without postulation of the eternal Ego? This will suffice for the professor’s third and last ground.

Let us next advert to his first ground. In the Buddhistic, doctrine a distinction was undoubtedly drawn between the Brahmanical Maya and the Buddhist Realism. To one, the Soul was only real, the world was a mere illusion; to the Buddhist apperceptions were all that was known, everything else was unknown.

(1) *Buddhism* 251.

(2) *Ib.* 270.

(3) *Ib.* 274.

(4) *Ib.* 272.

But it was the Buddhist psychology and not his metaphysics. It was an analysis of human consciousness; and in Buddhism, of all religions, psychology must be separated from metaphysics. This is admitted by no one more clearly than by Dr. Oldenberg himself: "The goal to which he pressed was, we must constantly repeat this, solely deliverance from the sorrowful world of origination and decease. Religious aspiration did not purposely and expressly demand that this deliverance should transport to nothingness, but when this was taught at all, expression was merely given thereby to the indifferent, accidental consequences of metaphysical reflections, which prevent the assumption of an everlasting immutable happy existence. In the religious life, in the tone which prevailed in the ancient Buddhist order, the thought of annihilation has had no influence." <sup>(1)</sup> But is it because it was taken for granted or was it because those privileged to know, knew that it was not and never could be the goal: otherwise how shall we reconcile it with the doctrine of eternal bliss of Nirvan and the deliverance only from re-births? This much Sariputta had made clear enough when he was questioned by the Brahman ascetic who asked him: "What is Nirvan?" To which Sariputta unhesitatingly replied, "The subjugation of desire, the subjugation of hatred, the subjugation of perplexity; this, O friend, is called Nirvan." <sup>(2)</sup> And the following words are put into the mouth of Buddha's most prominent disciples: "I long not for death; I long not for life; I wait till mine hour come, like a servant who awaiteth his reward. I long not for death: I long not for life: I wait till mine hour come, alert and with watchful mind." <sup>(3)</sup>

Dr. Oldenberg's second ground need not detain us. He would be the first to admit himself that whenever Buddha denied the persistence of the Ego, he did so about the Ego which originated with consciousness; it was the outer kernel of our illustration.

Buddhism, like other religions, has developed mysticism; and one aspect of the secret doctrine claims to connect the mortal with the immortal, the transitory with the eternal

(1) *Buddhism* 205.

(2) *Milinda Patha* 45.

(3) *Dhammapad* 414; *Samy. Nik.* II.

verities of existence. The practice of *Yoge* is said to arm the *Yogi* with supernatural powers in this life and expand his sight into the unseen. It establishes a *nexus* between him and the celestial hierarchy who stand as above man as the brute creation stands below him. That in cosmic gradation while forms of lower life are infinite and many of them invisible, there is no reason to suppose that its manifestation in its highest form is necessarily visible and only culminates with man. That man cannot be the highest handiwork of Nature, is made apparent by his own physical evolution in countless years. That he could not have been the be-all and the end-all of Nature, can admit of no doubt. The mediæval astronomer placed the earth in the highest empyrean. He denied the possibility of other planets or other worlds. The modern astronomer admits that the earth is an insignificant and an obscure speck in the starry universe, and that there must be millions of other planets careering through space in which life of a higher and nobler amplitude must have manifested itself; and if we cannot accost, an archangel in our mundane existence, is there no possibility of establishing a spiritual contact with them by the expanded power of the mind, by the whiter life of moral purity? The secret doctrine of Buddhism claims to give an insight into such transcendental truths, an insight to this vision glorious. But one need not expatiate upon such *a priori* possibilities. The fact still remains whether the method employed by the mystic and the *Yogi* takes him nearer to that objective. It is a question upon which one is entitled to entertain doubt; but it is a question which, the mystic believes, can only be answered *ambulando*.

Having so far cleared the ground we have still to see what there is in the teaching and doctrine of Buddha to support the hypothesis of his secret doctrine. It must be confessed that Buddha has composed no Sutra for the elite of his faith; nor has he anywhere set out the positive elements of his doctrine. But nevertheless it was not only the under-current of his views but his views became unintelligible without it. As has been already seen, the doctrine of Karm is a moral law and one which can have no place unless there is the continuity of

existence. His cycle of births and re-births, the reasons of which he had unfolded in his sorites of causation, would be meaningless without the externalization of Soul. His doctrine was preached to his disciples in its dual phases— to the generality of them he said: “As the great Sea, O disciples, is permeated by but one taste, the taste of salt, so also, O disciples, this doctrine and this law are pervaded by but one taste, the taste of deliverance.” Deliverance was then the goal, deliverance from suffering and the cycle of re-births; but deliverance into what? It cannot be nothingness, because it would not then be deliverance but annihilation. This was the opening vestibule to his doctrine of deliverance, the deliverance from the misery of life and delivery into eternal bliss. This Buddha again and again emphasized as the final goal of his teaching: for instance, when Magandhiya, a recluse, accused him of teaching revolutionary doctrines, Buddha replied to him in verse:

Health is the highest thing to get,  
Nirvan is the highest bliss,  
And of all paths the eightfold, 'tis  
That unto deathless safety leads.

Whereupon Magandhiya exclaimed: “How strange and wonderful is it, Sir, that you should so aptly quote that verse! I have heard my teachers and their teachers also say it.” On another occasion, he enunciated the scope and limit of his teachings: “Bhikkhus, I will teach you the Dhamm as symbolized by a raft, as something to escape by, but not to be clung fast to. Suppose a man came midway on his journey to a great sheet of water, beset as to its hither bank with many perils, but safe and secure as to its further shore, and to cross which neither bridge nor ship is there. But suppose he takes grasses, brushwood and branches and binds together a raft, that thereon, toiling with hands and feet, he gains the further shore in safety. Now do you judge that he should, how greatly the raft had helped him, bear it along with him on his head and shoulders, or should he leave it stranded or floating, and go thence whither he wished?.....Even thus, Bhikkhus, understand that ye must put away moral rules, let alone immoral rules.”<sup>(1)</sup>

(1) *Majjhima Nikay* I—134.

His Dhamm was then a rart and not a goal—a means to reach the other shore. What is that other shore? It is described in his very first sermon which he concluded as follows: "But when in these noble truths my three-fold knowledge and insight, duly with its twelve divisions was well purified, then, O Monks, in the world.....I had attained the highest complete enlightenment. Thus I knew. Knowledge arose in me, insight arose that the release of my mind is unshakable; this is my last existence; now there is no re-birth."<sup>(1)</sup> But this is only the negative gain. What is its outcome? It was clear from his advanced disciples what he meant. For instance, the sisters understood it to mean the attainment of a larger life, no longer fettered to a mortal frame but emancipated from its mortality and misery. They conclude their poem of joy with the following glowing thought:

Lo! the Nivanna of the little lamp!

Emancipation dawns! My heart is free! (<sup>2</sup>)

In another Sutta the brothers understand the Master to have taught them to the same effect:—

"The factors of my life, well understood,

Stand yet a little while with severed root.

Sorrow is slain! That quest I've won, and won

Is purity from four-fold venom's stain." (<sup>3</sup>)

That Buddh had graded his teaching is clear from what he had himself said: "There are three grades of training, Bhikkhus; what are the three? The higher ethics,<sup>(4)</sup> the higher consciousness, the higher insight (or wisdom). What is the higher ethics? When the Bhikkhu lives by the code of discipline and in conformity to the precepts of morality, when he sees danger in small offences, when having undertaken the precepts he practises them.

"What is the second grade? When a Bhikkhu, aloof from sense-appetites, aloof from evil thoughts, enters into and abides in the first *Dhyan*,<sup>(5)</sup> wherein attention is directed and sustained, which is born of solitude and filled with zest and

(1) *Dharmak Appavattan Sutta*; Samy. V—420;

(2) *Psalms of the Sisters* 72;

(3) *Sutta Nipat*.

(4) *Sila*—Gr. *Ethos*, Lit. habits.

(5) *Pali*—*Jhan*, "Rapt Meditation."



pleasurable emotion ; when next, from the subsiding of attention, initial and sustained, he enters into and abides in the second *Ādhyāna*, which is inward tranquillizing of the mind, self-contained and uplifted from the working of attention ; which is born of concentration, full of zest and pleasurable emotion ; when, next, through the quenching of zest, he abides indifferent, and enters and abides in the third *Ādhyāna*, mindful and fully conscious, experiencing in the body that pleasure whereof the Aryans (nobles) declare ‘ He who is indifferent, but mindful, dwells in happiness ;’ and when next by putting away both pleasant and painful emotion, by dying out of the joy and misery he used to know, he enters into and abides in the fourth *Ādhyāna*, that utterly pure mindfulness and indifference wherein is neither happiness nor unhappiness.”

“ What is the third grade ? When a Bhikkhu knows, as it really is, that this is suffering ; this is the cause of suffering : this is the cessation of suffering ; this is the way leading to the cessation of suffering.”

Then follow the verses describing the three stages ending with the following lines : —

To him when consciousness doth near its end,  
To whom from craving utterly set free,  
Nibbanna of the burning flame hath come,  
And to his heart Release and Liberty. (1)

These discourses no doubt leave a blank at the end of the attainment of a larger consciousness. But as previously stated, it was not a subject for demonstration, and is therefore left alone, though the result attained by a liberated soul is unmistakably indicated. It has already been stated<sup>(2)</sup> that Buddha had no secrets which he only imparted to his adept pupils or did not impart at all to any one. This is made clear in the *Paṭimokṣa* itself where it is stated that Buddha had “ no such thing as the closed fist of a teacher who keeps something back.”<sup>(3)</sup> But nonetheless Buddhism did develop an esoteric side, though it was ritual and not doctrinal being limited to the reading of the *Paṭimokṣa* and the *Vinaya Pitak* only in the

(1) *Anguttar Nikāya* I. 236

(2) See Preface p. II

(3) Rhys Davids Tr. 30 cited 35 S.B.E.  
267, 268 f.n.(3)

presence of the members of the Order.<sup>(1)</sup> As Rhys Davids observes: "The fact is that there has never been any such thing as esoteric teaching in Buddhism, and that the modern so-called esoteric Buddhism is neither esoteric nor Buddhism. Its tenets, so far as they are Indian at all, are perfectly accessible, are well known to all those who choose to study the books of Indian mysticism, and are Hindu, not Buddhist. They are, indeed, quite contradictory to Buddhism, of which the authors of what they ignorantly call esoteric Buddhism know but very little—that little being only a portion of those beliefs which have been common ground to all religious teachers in India."<sup>(2)</sup> As already observed <sup>(3)</sup> the esoteric doctrine starts with the theory, patent enough, that this world is not the only world in space. The starry heavens disprove the contrary—and since it is one of the numerous worlds in the chain of creation in various degrees of evolution, such is also man. He is not without a beginning and with or without an end. He too has arisen in the process of evolution and will continue to pursue its circuit of evolution in which his life upon earth is only a brief incident. The esoteric doctrine invokes the aid of the law of Karm or predestination which it tries to reconcile with free-will, the one ruling the psychic law, the other the individual.

The constitution of man is resolvable into the following seven elements:—

(1) The body	<i>Rupe</i>	} Lower Principles.
(2) Vitality	<i>Jive</i> or <i>Pran</i>	
(3) Astral body	<i>Ling Sharir</i>	
(4) Animal Soul	<i>Kam Rupe</i>	
(5) Human Soul	<i>Manas</i>	} Higher Principles.
(6) Spiritual Soul	<i>Buddhi</i>	
(7) Spirit	<i>Atma</i> or <i>Atta</i>	

These are known as the seven principles of man. The first principle that enters into his composition is matter, the second imparts to it consciousness or life. It is the force of energy which vitalizes inorganic matter into an organic being. The third is the spiritual duplicate of the physical

(1) Rhys Davids Tr. 36 cited 35 S. B. E.

(2) *Ib.* 268 f. n.  
(3) *Id.* 359. 360 *ante*



(11) Indian Museum Buddh seated in earth touching attitude—from Magadh (Mediæval).



body. It guides *Jive* in its work on the physical particles, transforming them into the shape which they assume. At death it is disembodied for a brief period, and may for a time assume the shape and form of the body which it has left. It may vivify the particles of matter floating in the air and for the moment re-appear in the same form which men call ghosts of men's former selves. These three are the lower principles of man.

The fourth is the seat of will or desire. It is the root principle of the brute creation susceptible of evolution. The fifth is the seat of reason and memory which may be projected into space. It is this principle which remains undeveloped in man. When developed, it quickens to activity the sixth which otherwise remains in embryo. This, when developed, penetrates the seventh. The fifth and the sixth principles, when combined, preserve human individuality through a succession of lives. Human consciousness so far as it is sensuous, perishes with death but the spirit survives and passes into new bodies. The fact that every earthly mortal *Buddh* has his pure and glorious counterpart in the mystic world, free from the relative conditions of this material life, or rather that *Buddh* under material conditions is only an appearance, the reflection or emanation or a type of a "*Dhyani Buddh*" is a reality to the *Arhat*, the adept in the esoteric doctrine, which he can realise in his own life. His mental vision, enlarged by the practice of *Yoge*, transcends the bounds of space and time, penetrating the boundless empyrean and sees, as in a looking-glass, the process of evolution of man and spirit, appraising their relative values and inter-dependence and their true place in the great scheme of the Universe, all tending, with varying pace, to that grand event, to that sublime state of consciousness and a repose in omniscience—the eternal *Nirvan*.

The attainment of this larger insight is only possible by the strict regimen of Self—in one word, *Yoge*, which though Hindu in origin, was engrafted on to *Buddhism* as its esoteric doctrine. *Yoge* philosophy is intended to plumb the hidden

depths of the human mind. It proceeds on the assumption that the mind of man possesses latent powers which can neither be known, much less utilized, unless it goes through a severe training and a process of purification stimulating and manifesting its dormant capacity. According to Yoge philosophy man is composed of seven principles: (1) the physical body; (2) the vital force (*Pran*); (3) the astral body; (4) Instinctive mind; (5) the Intellect; (6) the Spiritual Mind; and (7) the Spirit. The physical body is the lowest and crudest manifestation of life, still, being the abiding place of Spirit, it has to be made a receptacle before the Spirit would make itself manifest. It is like the crude ore which, when cleansed, yields up its invaluable ingots which otherwise lie embedded and invisible in the dross. *The Hath Yoge* deals with the methods of its preservation in a state of health and purity. It teaches us how to maintain its health and strength. We have next the *Raj Yoge*, which similarly deals with the training of the mind and the development of its psychic powers. Then comes *Karm Yoge*, which deals with the freedom of the soul by means of work and development of altruism. It is the philosophy of service. Fourthly, we have the *Bhakti Yoge* allied to the last, which aims at perfection through love; while lastly comes the *Gyan Yoge*, which awakens the Spirit in its endeavour to obtain union with cosmic power—Brahm and opens the eye to universal consciousness. When the *Yogi* has purified his body and ennobled his mind, his vision is enlarged, his powers strengthened and his consciousness blending with the universal consciousness, he is able to manifold his psychic and physical energy and with its aid perform feats which, being out of the ordinary experience of mankind, are characterised as miracles. But this is merely incidental. The real fruit of this severe trial is the acquisition of wider knowledge of cosmic creation, its laws and purpose and its inter-relation to man and his destiny.

One such knowledge acquired by the *Yogi* is that of his past. Buddha had acquired such knowledge and some of the stories in the *Jatak* record the incidents of his previous lives.

Yoge has eight stages, the first four of which belong to the exoteric and the rest to its esoteric side. These are:—

- |                      |                                |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| (1) <i>Yam.</i>      | (5) <i>Pratyahar.</i>          |
| (2) <i>Niyam.</i>    | (6) <i>Dharana.</i>            |
| (3) <i>Asan.</i>     | (7) <i>Dhyan.</i>              |
| (4) <i>Pranayam.</i> | (8) <i>Sama<sup>dh</sup>i.</i> |

The first of the stages in the Buddhist practice of Right Concentration is described as a state of mind from which for the time being, is banished all desire for the pleasurable and delightful, all craving for anything unwholesome, anything making for bondage to the things of sense. In this state, however, there is retained the faculty of taking up a subject of reflection and of dwelling upon it, turning it over and considering it at length; in the ordinary processes of it intellection remains active, their working being accompanied by a feeling of pleasure at this temporary release from the thralldom of attachment to objects of sense-delight.

In the second stage, the normal processes of thinking are left behind. There is no more taking up of a subject of thought and reflecting upon it. The mind exists in a state of simple existence, in the enjoyment of utter peace and tranquillity like that of a quiet lake whose smooth, glassy surface remains free from the disturbance of any reflected object. This state of concentration and tranquillisation is accompanied by a feeling of joy and bliss, that is the outcome of this same concentration and tranquillity.

In the third stage, the last shred of delight in the pleasures of sense, even of that most rarified, sublimated description is transcended, and there is experienced a tranquil, all-satisfying happiness, unshadowed by the least disturbance due to any anticipation of happiness to come. This last, technically called "Piti," entirely disappears and there supervenes a state of clear, unruffled, perfectly conscious bliss, the bliss of being done with all "that unrest which men miscall delight."

In the fourth stage, the very idea of such opposites as pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow is transcended, left

behind, all memory of any such things experienced in the past is clean wiped out, and a state of calm, clear, perfect collectedness of mind is experienced, into which there enters not the least trace of feeling of pleasure or of unpleasure, a state of equanimity, utter and complete.

The remaining four *Dhyans* or states of concentration which make up the eight, possess in common a subtler, more sublimated character than the four just mentioned.<sup>(1)</sup>

These states have for their objective the attainment of eight-fold knowledge as follows:—

- (1) Discernment of the inter-relation between mind and body.
- (2) The supernatural hearing of voices and sounds both celestial and human—the distant becoming near.
- (3) Discernment of another person's mind.
- (4) Remembrance of previous lives and their incidents.
- (5) Super-normal vision enabling insight into the destinies of beings, dying and re-born.
- (6) Conscious extinguishment of the influence of sense—desires, ignorance and the desire for re-birth.
- (7) Evoking or creating a phantom body, the double of one's body at will.
- (8) Super-normal locomotion in which gravitation and opacity cease to obstruct.

All these are the subject of elaborate disquisition by Buddhaghosh<sup>(1)</sup> who proceeds on the assumption that by the purification of the body and the mind, by the development of its latent power of concentration, by training its "eye divine," man who looks such an abject creature of creation may easily become its master.

Buddh himself used to recount experiences of his previous re-births which would be illogical if he did not believe in the

<sup>(1)</sup> *Bhikkhū Silacara* : 10 Bud. Rer. 168, 169. (1918). <sup>(2)</sup> *Majjhima Nikāya* I—292.



immortality of the Soul. But his conception of the Soul was obviously different and at variance with the sense ordinarily ascribed to that concept. But neither Buddhism nor, indeed, any other religion has been able to go beyond a vague expectation of a happier, fuller, and eternal life, the nature of which might be individually felt, but it cannot be proved. As Mrs. Rhys Davids writes: "And so without any definite belief as to how, or in what realm of the universe, he will re-arise as that successor to his present self, the pious Buddhist, no less than his pious brethren of other creeds, goes on giving money and effort, time and thought to good works, cheerfully believing that nothing of it can possibly forego its effect, but that it is all a piling up of merit or creative potency, to result, somewhere, sometime, somehow, in future happiness—happiness which, though he be altruistic the while, is yet more a future asset of *his*, than of someone in whom he naturally is less interested than in his present self. He believes that, because of what he is now doing, someone now in process of mental creation by him, and to all intents and purposes his future 'self,' will one day taste less or more of life's trials. To that embryonic character he is inextricably bound, ever making or marring it, and for it he is therefore and thus far responsible."<sup>(1)</sup>

That longing for such immortality is not merely a vague craving, but a revelation given only to those who have undergone the preparatory stage of bodily and mental purification and are prepared to engage in deep meditation. That meditation concentrates the mind and enlarges its vision is not only the doctrine of Yoge and the Buddhists', but one of those who by practice have learnt to appreciate its value:

"Nor, less I trust,  
To them many have owed another gift,  
Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood,  
In which the burden of the mystery,  
In which the heavy and the weary weight  
Of all this unintelligible world,

(1) *Buddhism*, 149.

Is lightened :—that serene, that blessed mood,  
 In which the affections gently lead us on,  
 Until the breath of this corporeal frame  
 And even the motion of our human blood

Almost suspended, we are laid asleep  
 In body, and become a living soul ;  
 While with an eye made quiet by the power  
 Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,  
 We see into the life of things.”<sup>(1)</sup>

It is this introspection, this *Ādhyāna*, which brings the soul in contact with the reality of the universe which eludes the search of consciousness and laboured ratiocination.

As regards the existence of a Supreme Deity, the question must either be susceptible of metaphysical demonstration or individual illation on the former subject. Buddha has already been quoted at length.<sup>(2)</sup> It is clear from the *Pitaks* that Buddha did not believe in a salvation resulting from divine grace ; nor did he invoke any extraneous assistance to explain his cosmogony. To him the world appeared *Karak* ; not made, as it exists, but rather as one “ without maker, without known beginning, continuing to exist by virtue of a concatenation of cause and effect.”<sup>(3)</sup> But while it disposed of the theory of paternal government, it did not deny the existence of God, though He was given no share in the plan of salvation. The latest view of Buddhism appears to have been that man’s emancipated soul reached a higher plane—that of the gods whose elevation into the *Tushit* heaven brought them into contact with Maitreya (the Buddha-to-be) : Buddhaghosh refers to it in the following words : “ One who desires to practise recollection on divinities should practise it, endowed with the virtues of faith, etc., resulting in accordance with the Noble Path, and alone and secluded, he should set the divinities as witnesses, recollecting his virtues of faith etc. thus : there are the gods who are the four Great Kings, Tritrinshat gods (of the heaven of the Thirty-three),

<sup>(1)</sup> Wordsworth ; *Tintern Abbey*, lines 35—49 (Oxford Wordsworth) p. 206.

<sup>(2)</sup> Ch. XII “ God or No God ” *ante*,

Buddhaghosh : *Way of Purity* XVIII.

<sup>(3)</sup> *Anguttar Nikāy* III—287.

the Yama, Tushit, Nimmanarati and Pranimit Vasvatti gods ; there are the gods of the Brahm world, and gods beyond these ; these gods endowed with such faith, have departed thence (from their former state) and have arisen here (i.e., in whatever heaven they now are). In me also such faith is found. Endowed with such morality.....with such learning.....with such renunciation...with such wisdom these gods have departed thence and have arisen here. In me also such wisdom is found."

The western conception of "God" is the Jewish conception of Jehovah, who, as already seen, was only their national God. The West has borrowed without scrutiny this concept with all its implications. "For eighteen centuries, more or less, the belief that the God of the Jews is the God of the universe, and that the Jewish scriptures are the word of God has lain like an incubus on the thought and conscience of the West. The time has come for criticism to say plainly that until this incubus has been finally exorcised, the higher thought of the West will not be able to awake from its long and troubled sleep."<sup>(1)</sup> Whatever might be said of the West, so far as India is concerned, its philosophy never encouraged a belief in a personal God. Its conception of Brahm was at first monotheistic and eventually developed into a Pantheistic ideal. Buddh appears to have combated this view : but what his own view was—must ever remain a subject of controversy.

Buddh had certainly granted the existence of Universal Energy which permeated all matter and was in all its movements controlled by an eternal, universal, inexorable law. He equally regarded matter a mechanism for the purification of the soul in its transit through corporeal forms, the course of which was determined by the degree of its own refinement. As such, it made every man the master of his own Destiny and so far opposed the Vedantic doctrine of priestly mediation and the obtaining of divine grace by devotion, sacrifice or any form of extraneous intervention. It is in this sense that he regarded

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(1) *The Creed of Buddh*, 246 f.n.

his Dhamm or law as supreme. It dispensed with the necessity of a divine Creator in the sense in which that concept was understood by Hinduism or other religions. In this sense it may be asserted that Buddh never had to inquire, nor, indeed, did inquire into the remaining attributes of Divinity. So far Buddh could safely go some way with Varun in assuming the existence of "that *Spirit* from which all created beings proceed, in which having proceeded in which they live, towards which they tend, and in which they are at last absorbed; that spirit study to know, it is the Great One."

His teleological explanation of the universe was, indeed, that which the Vedantist had himself offered, though he could not reconcile that theory with Divine Government which ignored the uniform working of that law. A great writer, by no means friendly to his doctrine, had to admit that the philosophical ability displayed by him is very great, indeed, it may be doubted whether Europe has produced its metaphysical equivalent.<sup>(1)</sup>

Buddh had to choose between the supremacy of the cosmic law and its denial in a Divine dispensation and he chose the former. But that alone did not rule him out as an atheist or an agnostic, unless these terms be used as they have been by the theologians of anthropocentric cult, in denouncing those who happen to disagree with their dogmas. Dr. Draper suggests that while Buddh was so far aided by his irrefragable logic, "his primary conception was not altogether consistently carried out in the development of the details." "Great," he goes on to add, "as was the intellectual ability of its author—so great as to extort our profoundest, though it may be reluctant, admiration, there are nevertheless moments in which it appears that his movement is becoming wavering and unsteady—that he is failing to handle his ponderous weapon with self-balanced power. This is particularly the case in that point in which he is passing from the consideration of pure force to the unavoidable consideration of visible nature, the actual existence of which he seems to be obliged to deny. But when I am not

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(1) I Draper's *Intellectual Development of Europe*—72.

sure that I have caught with precision his exact train of thought or have represented his intention with critical correctness, considering the extraordinary power he elsewhere displays, it is more probable that I have failed to follow his meaning, than that he has been, on the points in question, incompetent to deal with his task.”<sup>(1)</sup>

The fact is that the philosophical historian had not then before him the first hand materials, since made available to European scholars. Buddh has, as explained in the previous chapter, consistently explained his view of the visible universe. He has dismissed the Vedantic theory of the visible being non-existent by demonstrating the imperfection and incompleteness of sensualism. This is admitted by Dr. Draper himself in another place where he says: “As to the eternal world, we cannot tell how far it is a phantom, how far a reality, for our senses possess no trustworthy criterion of truth. They convey to the mind representations of what we consider to be external things, by which it is furnished with materials for its various operations; but, unless it acts in conjunction with the senses, the operation is lost, as in that absence which takes place in deep contemplation. It is owing to our inability to determine what share these internal and external conditions take in producing a result that the absolute or actual state of Nature is incomprehensible by us. Nevertheless, conceding to our mental infirmity the idea of a real existence of visible nature, we may consider it as offering a succession of impermanent forms, and as exhibiting an orderly series of transmutations, innumerable universes in periods of inconceivable time, emerging one after another, and creations and extinctions of systems of worlds taking place according to a primordial law.”<sup>(2)</sup> This appears to be the conclusion to which Dr. Draper’s inquiry equally drives him, and he leaves the question there.<sup>(3)</sup> The fact is that it has then reached its metaphysical limit, beyond which there may be a line of thought but no real doctrine, a hope, an aspiration and a faith, probabilism but no proof.

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<sup>(1)</sup> *Draper’s Intellectual development of Europe*—72.

<sup>(2)</sup> *Ib.* pp. 69, 70.

<sup>(3)</sup> *Ib.* II. Ch. XII p. 394.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### HIS PRECEPTS AND PARABLES.

Like the dogmas of all religions, the entire creed of Buddhism is stated in a nut-shell—since it comprises nothing more than a knowledge of the four sacred truths of the origin of suffering and the eight-fold holy way to end it. These two formulas taken together exhaust the doctrine of Buddhism. All else is secondary, explanatory and supplementary. He who masters the two—the four truths and the eight-fold path of delivery becomes entitled to attain to Buddhhood.<sup>(1)</sup> But, in order to acquire that knowledge of pain and the means of delivery from it, the disciple must possess a guide which is provided by the precepts and practice of the Order and its members. A sufficiently comprehensive, though elastic chart is laid down for this purpose. It includes his moral precepts and parables which, though obligatory upon all his disciples, are to guide all who aspire to spiritual excellence. The two together occupy a considerable space in Buddhist literature. Nor are they classified according to the subject they deal with, nor is their rigid classification possible; but their trend can be gathered from the ensuing extracts, which have had in many places to be condensed.

Buddh has placed the practice of virtue above all religions—including his own. To him it is the conduct—and not the conventional compliance with the ritual which he had prescribed—that paved the way to eternity. And as before stated, while he insisted upon good conduct, he insisted most upon the formation of character. “Beware of the anger of the mind, and control thy mind! Leave the sins of the mind and practise virtue with thy mind.”<sup>(2)</sup> “Watching his speech, well-restrained in mind, let a man but keep three roads clear, and he will achieve the way which is taught by the wise.”<sup>(3)</sup> “A wise man may conquer a thousand battles, but

(1) *Dhammapad*, XIV—191, 192; 10  
S. B. E. 33.

(2) *Ib.* XVII—233; *Ib.* 60.

(3) *Ib.* XX—281; *Ib.* 69.

he who conquers himself is the greatest conqueror.”<sup>(1)</sup> “A man is not a Bhikkhu, simply because he asks others for alms; he who adopts the whole law is a Bhikkhu, not he who only begs.”<sup>(2)</sup> “Not only by discipline and vows, not only by much learning, not by entering into a trance, not by sleeping alone, do I earn the happiness of release which no worldling can know. O Bhikkhu! he who has obtained the extinction of desires, has obtained confidence.”<sup>(3)</sup>

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## I

## HIS PRECEPTS.

## BE TRUTHFUL.

Every man is born with an axe in his mouth, by which the fool cuts himself when using bad language.

Praise not the blame-worthy: nor blame the praise-worthy: He who does so, gathers up sin in his mouth, and that sin will not give him joy.

Riches lost by dice are trifling compared to the sin that corrupts the mind.

He who says ‘I have not done it’ when he has, lies.

He who offends an offenceless man, his sin recoils on him like dust blown against him by the wind.

Do not speak what you do not believe.

Do not talk loosely.

Do not revile the just. Do not backbite any one.

Do not flatter—do not please others by thy flattery.

All thy sins will recoil on thee, ye liar, O thou foul-mouthed, false, ignoble, blasting, wicked, evil-doing, low, sinful, base-born man: Hell’s burning fire awaits thee and such as thou art.<sup>(4)</sup>

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## BE GOOD.

Not to commit any sin, to do good, and to purify one’s mind—that is the teaching of all the Buddhs.<sup>(5)</sup>

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(1) *Dhammapad*, VIII—103; *Ib.* 31.

(2) *Ib.* XIX—266; *Ib.* 66.

(3) *Ib.* XIX—271, 272; *Ib.* 67.

(4) (This and the following Suttas

are abridged in the text). *Kokaliya Sutta*  
10 S. B. E. 116-122.

(5) *Dhammapad*, XIV 183; 10 S. B. E. 51.

He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me—in those who harbour such thoughts hatred will never cease; but in those who do not harbour such thoughts hatred will cease. For, hatred does not cease by hatred at any time: hatred ceases by love, this is an old rule.”<sup>(1)</sup> “They who imagine truth in untruth, and see untruth in truth, never arrive at truth, but follow vain desires. They who know truth in truth, and untruth in untruth, arrive at truth, and follow true desires.”<sup>(2)</sup> “The virtuous man is happy in this world, and he is happy in the next; he is happy in both. He is happy when he thinks of the good he has done; he is still more happy when going on the good path.”<sup>(3)</sup>

BE SINCERE.

Then he exhorts people to be earnest. “By rousing himself by earnestness, by restraint and control, the wise may make for himself an island which no flood can overwhelm. Fools follow after vanity, men of evil wisdom. The wise man keeps earnestness as his best jewel. He who is earnest and meditative obtains ample joy.”<sup>(4)</sup> “Earnest among the thoughtless, awake among the sleepers, the wise man advances like a racer, leaving behind the pack.”<sup>(5)</sup>

He then exhorts people to guard their thoughts: “They are difficult to perceive, very artful, and they rush wherever they list: thoughts well-guarded, bring happiness. If a man’s thoughts are not dissipated, if his mind is not perplexed, if he has ceased to think of good and evil, then there is no fear for him while he is watchful. As a fletcher makes straight his arrow, a wise man makes straight his trembling and unsteady thought, which is difficult to guard, difficult to hold back; whatever a hater may do to a hater, or an enemy to an enemy, a wrongly directed mind will do himself greater mischief.”<sup>(6)</sup>

Then he inveighs against insincerity. “Like a beautiful flower, full of colour but without scent, are the fine but

(1) *Dhammapad* 3-6; 10 S. B. E. 4, 5.

(2) *Ib.* 11, 12; 10 S. B. E. 6.

(3) *Ib.* 18, 19; 10 S. B. E. 7, 8.

(4) *Ib.* 25, 26; 10 S. B. E. 10.

(5) *Ib.* 29; *Ib.* 10.

(6) *Ib.* Ch. III *Ib.* 12, 15.



fruitless words of him who does not act accordingly. As a lily will grow on a dung-hill and will exude its perfume, so shall the wise man shine forth by his knowledge. As the bee collects nectar and departs without injuring the flower, or its colour or scent, so let a sage dwell in his village.”<sup>(1)</sup>

#### BE ALERT.

Next follows a sermon on fools: “Long is the night to him who is awake. Long is a mile to him who is tired; long is the life to the foolish who do not know the true law.”

#### ROUSE THYSELF.

Do not be idle! Follow the law of virtue! The virtuous man rests in bliss in this world and in the next. <sup>(2)</sup>

“If a traveller does not meet with one who is his better, or his equal, let him firmly keep to his solitary journey; there is no companionship with a fool.”

“The fool who knows his foolishness is wise, at least so far. But a fool who thinks himself wise, he is a fool indeed.”

“If a fool be associated with a wise man, even all his life, he will perceive the truth as little as a spoon perceives the taste of soup.”

“If an intelligent man be associated for one minute only with a wise man, he will soon perceive the truth, as the tongue perceives the taste of soup.”

“Fools of poor understanding are their own worst enemies, for they do evil deeds which bear bitter fruits.”

“As long as an evil deed does not bear fruit, the fool thinks it is like honey; but when it ripens, then the fool suffers grief.”<sup>(3)</sup>

#### PEARLS OF WISDOM.

After the fool, comes the wise man. Of course the wisest thing he can do is to turn a Bhikkhu; but if he does not dare go so far, he has still to remember

(1) *Dhammapad*, Ch. IV; 10 S.B.E. 16-19. (2) *Ib.* Ch. V.; *Ib.* 20-22.

(3) *Ib.* XIII--168; *Ib.* 47.

that it is always best to look at the bright side of things. A wise man must choose his friends wisely. He must consort with the virtuous and not with low and evil men. A wise man will follow the lead of a wise man. He should be steadfast in his aim and purpose. "As a solid rock is not shaken by the wind, wise people falter not amidst blame and praise. They remain self-possessed and composed whether in joy or in sorrow."<sup>(1)</sup>

A man must avoid verbosity in thought and speech—an advice, which, judging from the verbosity and tiresome repetitions of the Suttas, the venerable disciples had followed too well in its breach rather than its observance. All the same, the advice is there.

"One word of sense is better than a thousand senseless words. One day passed in wisdom and reflection is better than one hundred years of vicious and unbridled life."

The wise man should not think that the good he is striving for is unattainable. As by the falling drops, the water-jug is filled; so by his small efforts, his purpose will be achieved. If a man does what is good, let him do it again; let him take pleasure in it: the accumulation of good is delightful, as much as the accumulation of evil is painful.

If a man offend a harmless, pure and innocent person, the evil falls back upon that fool, like dust thrown up against the wind.<sup>(2)</sup>

He who seeking his own happiness, punishes or kills beings, who also long for happiness, will not find happiness after death.

Do not speak harshly to anybody; those who are spoken to, will answer thee in the same way. Angry speech is painful, blows for blows will touch thee.<sup>(3)</sup>

So we have in the proverbs of Solomon. "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger: the

<sup>(1)</sup> *Dhammapad*, Ch. VI; 10 S. B. E.  
23-26.

<sup>(2)</sup> *Ib.* IX—125; *Ib.* 35.

<sup>(3)</sup> *Ib.* X—132, 133; *Ib.* 37.

tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright; but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness." (1)

"A fool does not know when he commits his evil deeds: but the wicked man burns by his own deeds, as if burnt by fire. There is no satisfying lusts even by a shower of gold pieces: he who knows that lusts have a short taste and cause pain, is wise." (2)

#### KNOW THYSELF.

He who formerly was reckless and afterwards became sober, brightens up this world, like the moon when freed from clouds. (3)

The fault of others is easily perceived, but that of one's self is difficult to perceive; a man winnows his neighbour's faults like chaff, but his own faults he hides, as a cheat hides the bad die from the player. If a man looks after the faults of others, he is always inclined to be offended, his own passions will grow, and he is far from the destruction of passions.

Self is the lord of self, who else could be the lord? With self well-subdued a man finds a lord such as few can find. Bad deeds and deeds hurtful to ourselves are easy to do, what is beneficial and good, that is very difficult to do—an ancient rendering of the modern proverb "Ill weeds grow apace."

"Let each man first teach himself what is right, let him then teach others," which has its parallellism in the 'Doctor cure thyself.'

"But life is hard to live for a modest man, who always looks for what is pure, who is disinterested, quiet, spotless, and intelligent." (4)

#### SUBDUE EVIL DESIRES.

If one longs for happiness let him cast off all desires; he who has cast off all desires will find the most perfect happiness.

(1) *Proverbs* XV.-1, 2, 10 S. B. E.

(2) *Ib.* XIV. 186; *Ib.* 52.

(3) *Dhammapad*, XIII-172; *Ib.* 47

(4) *Ib.* XVIII-245; *Ib.* 62.

As long as one follows after desires, one finds no satisfaction; they, who through wisdom have given it up, find contentment.

Desires are never satiated, wisdom affords contentment: he who has the contentment of wisdom cannot fall into the power of lust. They who have fondness for pleasure and who delight only in what is wrong would not perceive the danger they run, even if their life were drawing to a close.

"The evil-minded is subdued by wealth and seeks not after the other world; his mind is subverted by his fondness for desires, he brings destruction on himself and on others."

"Even a mountain of riches like unto Himavat would not suffice for the wealth of a single man; he who has understanding knows this full well."

"They who know that this (i.e. desire) is the origin of sorrow, how can they delight in pleasures? Having learnt that this is the cause of pain in the world, they acquire steadfastness to help to control themselves."<sup>(1)</sup>

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#### BE VIRTUOUS.

Look where you will, there is nothing dearer to man than himself; therefore, as it is the same thing that is dear to you and to others, hurt not others with what pains yourself.

"To all men this life is dear; all men fear punishment; you who are like unto them, strike not, put not to death."

"He who has been to a great distance, and who returns from afar without mishap, his assembled kinsfolk, and friends receive him with joyful cries of *Alal*; so likewise, he who has been virtuous, on arriving from this world into another, his good works receive him like kinsfolk and welcome him."

"Lay up, therefore, good works in view of the other world; for it is good works that receive beings in the other world."

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(1) *Udānagāyā* (Trübner) 11, 12.

“ He whose life is one of virtue is praised by the gods ; he, in whom there is nothing to be blamed, finds perfect joy in heaven.”<sup>(1)</sup>

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BE JUST.

A man is not just if he carries a matter by violence ; no, he who distinguishes both right and wrong, who is learned and guides others, not by violence, but by the same law, being a guardian of the law and intelligent, he is called just.

“ A man is not learned nor respectable, because he talks much, nor an elder because his head is grey ; he is learned, if he is patient, free from hatred and fear, free from impurity ; respectable, if free from hatred ; an elder, if free from impurity.”<sup>(2)</sup>

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GUARD YOUR TEMPER.

‘ He who holds back rising anger like a rolling chariot, him I call a real driver ; other people merely hold the reins.

“ Let a man overcome anger by love, let him overcome evil by good ; let him overcome the greedy by liberality, the liar by truth.”<sup>(3)</sup>

“ He who restrains his anger when it has arisen, as one who by medicine restrains the spread of the venom from spreading in the body, that Bhikkhu leaves this and the further shore as the snake discards his worn out skin.”<sup>(4)</sup>

“ Beware of bodily anger, and control the body ; leave the sins of the body, and with thy body practise virtue !

“ Beware of the anger of the tongue, and control thy tongue ! Leave the sins of the tongue, and practise virtue with thy tongue.

“ Beware of the anger of the mind, and control thy mind ! Leave the sins of the mind, and practise virtue with thy mind.

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(1) *Dhammapad.* XVIII—245 ; 10 S.B.E. 62. (3) *Uragevaggā* 1 ; *Ib.* 1.

(2) *Ib.* XVII—222, 223, *Ib.* 59.

(4) *Ib.*

“The wise who control their body, who control their tongue, the wise who control their mind, are indeed well-controlled.”<sup>(1)</sup>

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PERSEVERE.

If anything is to be done, let a man do it, let him attack it vigorously. A careless pilgrim only scatters the dust of his passions more widely.<sup>(2)</sup>

“It is an old saying, O Atul ; this is not as if of to-day : They blame him who sits silent, they blame him who speaks much, they also blame him who says little ; there is no one on earth who is not blamed.”<sup>(3)</sup>

“The world gives according to their faith or according to their pleasure : if a man frets about the food and the drink given to others, he will find no rest either by day or by night.”<sup>(4)</sup>

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AS OTHERS SEE US.

“There never was, there never will be, nor is there now, a man who is always praised. The fault of others is easily perceived, but that of oneself is difficult to perceive ; a man winnows his neighbour's faults like chaff, but his own fault he hides, as a cheat hides the bad die from the player.

“If a man looks after the faults of others, and is always inclined to be offended, his own passions will grow, and he is far from the destruction of passion.”

SOCIAL TIES.

In a dialogue with a deity, Buddh outlined the conduct which stands to a man's credit or debit in this world. Placing the knowledge of Dhamm above all, he proceeds to enumerate the causes of loss to the losing man as follows :—

“The man who is drowsy, fond of society, and without energy, lazy and given to anger :

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(1) *Dhammapad*, 232-234 ; 10 S.B.E. 60.

(2) *Ib.* 313 ; *Ib.* 76.

(3) *Ib.* 227 ; *Ib.* 59, 80.

(4) *Ib.* 249 ; *Ib.* 63.

“He who, being rich, does not support old parents:

“The man who, proud of his birth, of his wealth, and of his family, despises his relations: or enjoys alone his sweet things:

“He who, not satisfied with his own wife, is seen with harlots and the wives of others.”<sup>(1)</sup>

According to the Brahmanical system a person lost his caste, if he failed to follow some ceremonial rule of the caste: *e.g.*, eating food or drinking water touched by a person of a lower caste. Bad conduct did not matter. Buddha denounces bad conduct and shows that a man deserves to be an outcast, not because of his ceremonial impurity, but because of his evil conduct. He upholds the true, and denounces false notions of morality:—

He says—

“Deeds, not birth, make a man a Brahman: deeds not birth make him an outcast.”<sup>(2)</sup>

“Deeds, not birth, carry a man to heaven: they hurl him into hell. Birth cannot save man from his doom which awaits his evil deeds. He is not defiled because he eats the forbidden food, but because he commits forbidden and wicked deeds.”<sup>(3)</sup>

“The outcast Matanga goes to heaven because<sup>4</sup> of his deeds; and there was waited on by the Kshatriyas and Brahmins.”<sup>(4)</sup>

“A man is then an outcast, who is angry and bears hatred, who is wicked and hypocritical, who has embraced wrong views, who is deceitful:

“Who has no compassion for living beings and harms them;

(1) *Parabhav Sutta* 1-25; 10 S. B. E. (Pt. 2) 17-19.

(2) *Vasala Sutta* 27; *Ib.* (Pt. 2) 23.

(3) *Amagandh Sutta*; *Ib.* (Pt. 2) 39-41,

(4) *Ib.* 23; To the same effect *Amagandh Sutta* 1-14; *Ib.* (Pt. 2) 39-41; cf. *Matthew* XV—10.

“Who appropriates by theft what is another man’s property, or one who is the receiver of such stolen property ;

Who for a trifle kills another on the road ;

Who lies or bears false witness ;—

Who strives or by words annoys mother, father, brother, sister or mother-in-law ;

Or being rich does not support his old parents ;

Or goes after the wife of another ;

Or who lays siege to a village and destroys it ;

Who being asked for advice, knowingly gives false advice ;

Who by falsehood deceives another ;

Who poses as a prophet of future events—

He and such as he are all outcasts.”<sup>(1)</sup>

#### BE COMPASSIONATE.

“As a mother at the risk of her life watches over her own child, her only child, so also let every one cultivate a boundless (friendly) mind towards all beings.”

“Let him see that all creatures are happy :

“Let him not do anything mean, for which others who are wise, might reprove him :

“Standing, walking or sitting or lying, as long as he be awake, let him devote himself to this mind ; this (way of) living—they say, is the best in the world.

“He who is virtuous and endowed with perfect vision, subdues greediness for sensual pleasure, will himself never again go to a mother’s womb.”<sup>(2)</sup>

#### TEST OF FRIENDSHIP.

True friendship lies in deeds, not words.

“He who proclaims—‘I am a friend’—but does no work to prove it, is not a friend.

<sup>(1)</sup> *Vasala Sutta* : 1-27 (condensed in the text) ; 10 S. B. E. (Pt. 2) 20-24. <sup>(2)</sup> *Metta Sutta*, 1-10 ; *Ib.* 24, 25.



“ Friends are friends, if nothing can separate them.

“ They are friends, if they cling to each other as the child clings to his mother’s breasts.”

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#### HIGHEST BLESSINGS.

“ Asked by a deity to enumerate the highest blessings Buddha describes them:—

“ Thorough study of one’s self; he, whose mind is not shaken (when he is) touched by the things of the world, but remains free from sorrow, free from defilement, and secure (therefrom):

• Cultivation of the society of the wise and avoidance of that of fools:

“ Worship of those worthy of it:

“ Great learning and skill, well-learnt discipline, contentment and gratitude, the hearing of the Dhamm at due sessions; abstaining from sin, reverence and humility, contentment and gratitude refraining from intoxicating drinks, penance and chastity, patience and pleasant speech.

“ He whose mind is not shaken when he is touched by the things of the world (but remains) free from sorrow and free from defilement—this is the highest blessing.”<sup>(1)</sup>

Buddh’s religion is a religion of forgiveness; and he himself loves his enemies even when they had attempted to murder him. But nevertheless when he was questioned on this subject by an Army General, he reconciled his view to that of retribution. The General had asked for his consent to clear up one doubt which remained in his mind.

The Tathagat having given his consent, Simha said: “ I am a soldier, O Blessed One, and am appointed by the king

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(1) *Mahimangal Sutta* 1-12. (Condensed in the text); 10 S. B. E. (Pt. 2) 42, 43.

to enforce his laws, and to wage his wars. Does the Tathagat, who teaches kindness without end and compassions with all sufferers, permit the punishment of the criminal? And further, does the Tathagat declare that it is wrong to go to war for the protection of our homes, our wives, our children, and our property? Does the Tathagat teach the doctrine of a complete self-surrender, so that I should suffer the evil-doer to do what he pleases, and yield submissively to him who threatens to take by violence what is my own? Does the Tathagat maintain that all strife, including such warfare as is waged for a righteous cause, should be forbidden?"

Buddh replied: "The Tathagat says: 'He who deserves punishment, must be punished, and he who is worthy of favour must be favoured. Yet at the same time, he teaches to do no injury to any living being, but to be full of love and kindness. These injunctions are not contradictory, for, whosoever must be punished for the crimes which he has committed, suffers his injury not through the ill-will of the judge, but on account of his evil-doing. His own acts have brought upon him the injury that the executor of the law inflicts. When a magistrate punishes, let him not harbour hatred in his breast; yet a murderer, when put to death, should consider that this is the fruit of his own act. As soon as he will understand that the punishment will purify his soul, he will no longer lament his fate but rejoice at it.'"

And the Blessed One continued: "The Tathagat teaches that all warfare in which man tries to slay his brother is lamentable, but he does not teach that those who go to war in a righteous cause, after having exhausted all means to preserve the peace, are blameworthy. He must be blamed who is the cause of war."

"The Tathagat teaches a complete surrender of self, but he does not teach a surrender of anything to those powers that are evil, be they men or gods or the elements of Nature. Struggle must be, for all life is a struggle of some kind. But he that struggles should look to it, lest he struggles in the interest of self against truth and righteousness.

“He who struggles in the interest of self, so that he himself may be great or powerful or rich or famous, will have no reward ; but he who struggles for righteousness and truth, will have great reward, for even his defeat will be a victory.

“Self is not a fit vessel to receive any great success ; self is small and brittle, and its contents will soon be spilt for the benefit, and perhaps also for the curse of others.

“Truth, however, is large enough to receive the yearnings and aspirations of all selves, and when the selves break like soap-bubbles, their contents will be preserved and in the truth they will lead a life everlasting.

“He who goeth to battle, O Simha, even though it be a righteous cause, must be prepared to be slain by his enemies, for that is the destiny of warriors ; and should his fat over take him he has no reason for complaint.

“But he who is victorious should remember the instability of earthly things. His success may be great, but be it ever so great, the wheel of life may turn again and bring him down into the dust.

“However, if he moderates himself and, extinguishing all hatred in his heart, lifts his down-trodden adversary up and says to him, ‘come now and make peace and let us be brothers,’ he will gain a victory that is not a transient success, for its fruits will remain for ever.

“Great is a successful general, O Simha, but he who has conquered self is the greater victor.

“The doctrine of the conquest of self, O Simha, is not taught to destroy the souls of men, but to preserve them. He who has conquered self is more fit to live, to be successful, and to gain victories than he who is the slave of self.

“He whose mind is free from the illusion of self, will stand and not fall in the battle of life.

“He whose intentions are righteousness and justice, will meet with no failure, but be successful in his enterprises and his success will endure.

"He who harbours in his heart love of truth, will live and not die, for he has drunk the water of immortality.

"Struggle then, O general, courageously; and fight your battles vigorously, but be a soldier of truth, and the Tathagat will bless you."

When the Blessed One had spoken thus, Simha, the General said: "Glorious Lord, glorious Lord! Thou hast revealed the truth. Great is the doctrine of the Blessed One. Thou, indeed, art the Buddha, the Tathagat, the Holy One. Thou art the teacher of mankind. Thou showest us the road of salvation, for this indeed is true deliverance. He who follows thee will not miss the light to enlighten his path. He will find blessedness and peace. I take my refuge, Lord, in the Blessed One, and in his Doctrine, and in his Brotherhood. May the Blessed One receive me from this day forth while my life lasts as a disciple who has taken refuge in him."

And the Blessed One said: "Consider first, Simha, what you are doing. It is becoming that persons of rank like you, do nothing without due consideration."

Simha's faith in the Blessed One increased. He replied: "Had other teachers, Lord, succeeded in making me their disciple, they would carry around their banners through the whole city of Vaishali, shouting: 'Simha, the General, has become our disciple!' For the second time, Lord, I take my refuge in the Blessed One, and in the Dhamm, and in the Sangh. May the Blessed One receive me from this day forth while my life lasts, as a disciple who has taken his refuge in him."

Said the Blessed One: "For a long time, Simha, offerings have been given to the Nirgranthas in your house. You should therefore, deem it right also in the future to give them food when they come to you on their alms-pilgrimage."

And Simha's heart was filled with joy. He said: "I have been told, Lord: 'The shraman Gautam says: 'To me alone and to nobody else gifts should be given. My pupils

alone and the pupils of no one else should receive offerings. But the Blessed One exhorts me to give also to the Nirganthas. Well, Lord, we shall see what is reasonable. For the third time, Lord, I take my refuge in the Blessed One, and in his Dhamm, and in his fraternity.”<sup>(1)</sup>

King Milind had put a similar question to Nagsen to which the latter replied to the same effect, though his reasoning was thoroughly illogical :

K. “ Is then, Nagsen, the execution of robbers part of the doctrine laid down by the Tathagatas ? ”

N. “ Certainly not, O king.”

K. “ Then why have the Tathagatas laid down that the robber is to be taught better ? ”

N. “ Whosoever, great king, may be put to death, he does not suffer execution by reason of the opinion put forth by the Tathagatas. He suffers by reason of what he himself has done. But notwithstanding that the doctrine of the Dhamm has been taught (by the Buddhs), would it be possible, great king, for a man, who had done nothing wrong, and was walking innocently along the streets, to be seized and cut to death by any wise person ? ”

K. “ Certainly not.”

N. “ But why ? ”

K. “ Because of his innocence.”

N. “ Just so, great king, since the thief is not put to death through the word of the Tathagatas, but only through his own act, how can any fault be rightly found on that account with the Teacher ? ”

K. “ It could not be, Sir.”

N. “ So you see the teaching of the Tathagatas is a righteous teaching.”

(1) Carus: *Gospel of Buddha* 126-130.

K. "Very good, Nagsen! That is so, and I accept it as you say."<sup>(1)</sup> Nagsen might have added that the thief would never have been the thief, if he had observed the precepts of the Blessed One, and that he who punishes the thief, does so, not because he loves punishment, but because it is for his own good in future life, as also because it reduces the sufferings of others."

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#### SHUN PRIDE.

"Be calm and shun pride: Shun women; cultivate equanimity: be not covetous: let thy wants be few. Take whatever is offered; and bless the giver for his gift. What thou hast not got, be thankful that thou hast got something: curb thy desire. Be moderate in thy diet.

"Understand this from the waters in chasms and cracks: noisy go the small waters: the vast ocean is still. He who is self-restrained: he who curbs his tongue—he has attained wisdom."<sup>(2)</sup>

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#### AVOID SENSUAL PLEASURES.

"If thou desirest sensual pleasure, thou shalt get it: but when it fails there is pain.

"He who avoids sensual pleasure, avoids treading on the hood of a snake.

"He who covets pleasure, will find pain close at his heels, which will overwhelm him like a sheep with a broken knee.

"Therefore avoid sensual pleasures."<sup>(3)</sup>

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#### AVOID WORLDLINESS.

"Short indeed is this life; one dies within one hundred years and if one lives longer, then he dies of old age.

"People grieve from selfishness: perpetual cares kill them. This world is full of disappointment: hence let no one live in a house.

"All that a man thinks: "This is mine"—is left behind by death. Knowing this, let not the wise turn himself to worldliness.

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(1) *Mūlinda IV*—3-37; 35 S. B. E. 256, 257. (2) *Kam Sutta* 10 S. B. E. 143-1-10; 19 S. B. E. 151, 152.

(3) *Nalaka Sutta*; 10 S. B. E. 123-129.

“As a man awakened does not see those he saw in his sleep, so he does not see the beloved ones who have passed away and are dead.

“A monk who has no attachments and cultivates the mind of a recluse, does not re-appear after death.

“As a drop of water does not stick to a lotus, so let the sage not cling to the objects of sensation.”<sup>(1)</sup>

#### AVOID DISPUTATION.

“Avoid disputation: it leads to mutual abuse and vain glorification of self.

“After the heat of controversy, the disputant regrets having lost in the dispute. He wails, because he is beaten; and if he wins and is applauded, it leads to pride and arrogance. Therefore dispute not as it leads to no purification of self.

“Those who go about proclaiming ‘This is my doctrine, it only is true,’ say, ‘There is no opponent for thee.’”<sup>(2)</sup>

“A disputant thinks himself superior, distinguished or low, but he who is unmoved by such failing, to him the not ‘equal’ and ‘distinguished’ do not exist.”<sup>(3)</sup>

“Let not the sage, homeless and a wanderer free from lust and without craving for future existence, free from greed, confessor of peace, get into quarrelsome talk with people.”

## II

#### HIS PARABLES.

Buddh couched his popular teachings in the form of parables and stories—a practice which Christ equally made his own. He justified this mode of instruction on the obvious ground that it went to the head through the heart and was, therefore, as easily understood as it was retained. He thought: “I have taught the truth which is excellent in the beginning,

(1) *Garb Sutta* 1-10; 10 S. B. E. 150, 151.

(2) *Pasur Sutta* 1-11; 10 S. B. E. 153, 154.

(3) This clause and the following are taken from *Magandiya Sutta* 8-12; 10 S. B. E. 155, 156.

excellent in the middle, and excellent in the end ; it is glorious in its spirit and glorious in its letter. But simple as it is, the people cannot understand it. I must speak to them in their own language. I must adapt my thoughts to their thoughts. They are like unto children, and love to hear tales. Therefore, I will tell them stories to explain the glory of the Dharma. If they cannot grasp the truth in the abstract arguments by which I have reached it, they may nevertheless come to understand it, if it is illustrated in parables."

The following parables and stories carry their own moral.

#### WHY PRAY ?

Vashisth and Bharadvaj were two Brahmans. They had a quarrel about the right path to salvation. The young Brahman Vashisth said that the direct way to reach Brahm was that pointed by the Brahman Pushkarasadi ; but the other denied this, and said the path was that announced by the Brahman Tarukh ; whereupon Vashisth suggested their going to consult Buddha, who was then encamped in the neighbourhood. They both went to him and stated their difficulty. " Where is then the dispute ? " asked Gautam " Why, this " replied Vashisth, " that there are six Brahmans and each of them says his is the only way."

" Well " asked Buddha, " is there any of them who has seen Brahm ? "

" No indeed, Gautam."

" Or their disciples ? "

" No."

Then added Gautam, " They show you the path which they themselves have not seen and of which they know nothing : Is it not foolish, is it not like the blind leading the blind ? "

Vashisth assented.

Then Gautam continued : " Suppose a man should say ' I love the most beautiful woman in this land,' and people should ask him, whether she is a Kshatriya, a Brahman, a Vaishya or a Shudra. And so asked, he should say ' No.'



And when he is asked---‘ what is her family name, her own name, whether she is tall or short, dark or fair or in what town or city she lives ? ’ and the answer will be the same. Would it not be loving and longing for a woman, whom one never knew nor had ever seen ? Now Vashisth---what do you think of such a man, will not he be called a fool who talked about loving a woman he knew nothing about ? ”

Vashisth. of course, agreed.

“Then,” said Gautam “ Is not the talk of the Brahmans equally foolish. Neither they nor any one up to the seventh generation, nor indeed, any one has seen where, or whence, or whither Brahm is, and yet they profess to show you the way to Him. Does it not follow, Vashisth, that the talk of the Brahmans versed in the three Vedās is foolish talk ?

“ Just, Vashisth, as if a man should make a stair-case in the place where four roads cross, to mount up to a mansion. And people should say to him ‘ well good friend, this mansion, to mount up into which you are making this staircase, do you know whether it is in the east, or in the south, or in the west, or in the north ? Whether it is high or low or of medium size ? ’ And when asked, he should answer ‘ No.’

“ And people should say to him, ‘ But then, good friend, you are making a staircase to mount up into something---taking it for a mansion---which, all the while, you know not, neither have seen ! ’ And when so asked, he should answer ‘ Yes.’

“ And again, Vashisth, if this river, Asirvati, were full of water even to the brim and over-flowing ; and a man with business on the other side, bound for the other side, should come up and want to cross her. And he standing on this bank, should invoke the further bank, and say---‘ Come hither, O further bank ! come over to this side ! ’ Now what think you Vashisth ? Would the further bank by reason of that man’s invoking and praying and hoping and praising come over to this side ? ”

Certainly not, Gautam ! ’

"In just the same way, Vashisth, do the Brahmans versed in the three Vedas—omitting the practice of those qualities which really make a man a Brahman, and adopting the practice of those qualities which really make men not Brahmans—say thus—'Indra we call upon you, Soma we call upon, Varun we call upon, Ishan we call upon, Prajapati we call upon, Brahm we call upon, Mahiddhi we call upon, Yam we call upon you..... will they by their mere invoking, and praying and hoping and praising become united with Brahm?' "(1)

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#### AVAUNT SUPERSTITION.

When the Blessed One was staying at the bamboo-grove near Rajgrah he once met on his way Srigal, a householder, who, clasping his hands, turned to the four quarters of the world, to the zenith above, and to the nadir below. And the Blessed One knowing that this was done according to the traditional religious superstition to avert evil, asked Srigal: 'Why are you performing these strange gyrations?' Srigal replied—'Do you think it strange that I should protect my home against the influence of demons? I know that thou wouldst tell me that incantations are of no avail and possess no saving power. But listen to me and know, that in performing this rite I honour, reverence, and keep sacred the words of my father.'

Then the Tathagat said: 'You do well, O Srigal, to honour, reverence and keep sacred the words of your father; and it is your duty to protect your home, your wife, your children, and the children of your children against the hurtful influences of evil spirits. I find no fault with the performance of your father's rite. But I find that you do not understand the ceremony. Let the Tathagat, who is speaking to you as a spiritual father and loves you not less than did your parents, explain to you the meaning of the six directions.'

(1) *Devigga Sutta* 1—25; 11 S. B. E. 167-180.

'To guard your home by mysterious ceremonies is not sufficient; you must guard it by good deeds. Turn to your parents in the East, to your teachers in the South, to your wife and children in the West, to your friends in the North, and regulate the zenith of your religious relations above you, and the nadir of your servants below you. Such is the religion your father wants you to have, and the performance of the ceremony shall remind you of your duties.'

And Srigal thanked the Blessed One and joined his Order.<sup>(1)</sup>

#### AVOID EVIL.

There are evils (*Asuvas*)<sup>(2)</sup> which should be abandoned, brethren, by insight; there are evils, which should be abandoned by subjugation; there are evils, which should be abandoned by right use; there are evils, which should be abandoned by avoidance; there are evils, which should be abandoned by removal; there are evils which should be abandoned by cultivation.

Those to be abandoned by insight: the unconverted man, who does not understand the true doctrine, nor is trained in it, who does not know what to consider and what not; e.g., the evil of lust, the evil of life, the evil of ignorance.

Things like the following, which it is unwise to think about: "Have I existed during the ages that are past, or have I not? What was I during the ages that are past? How was I during the ages that are past? Shall I exist during the ages of the future? or shall I not? What shall I be during the ages of the future?" or as to the present.

"Do I after all exist, or am I not? How am I? This is a being; whence now did it come, and whither will it go?"

Things which unwisely considered gives rise to the following (absurd) notions:—"As something true and real he

(1) *Sept. Sutta* (Grimblot, Paris), Carus 122, 123.

(2) *Asuvas*—lit. "a running or flowing", a "leak," evil, defilement, fault, stain.

gets the notion—"I have a self" or "I have not a self," or "By myself I am conscious of myself" or "By myself I am conscious of my non-self."

"This soul of mine can be perceived, it has experienced the result of good and evil actions committed here and there: now this soul of mine is permanent, lasting, eternal, has the inherent quality of never-changing, and will continue for ever and ever!"

"This, brethren, is called the walking in delusion, the jungle of delusion, the wilderness of delusion, the puppet show of delusion, the writing of delusion, the fetter of delusion."

"One living in this delusion is never free from pain."

"And what are the things which he should consider, but does not?—the evil of lust, the evil of life and the evil of ignorance, all of which having sprung up, grow great. And what are the things which he should not consider and does?—the evil of lust, the evil of life; the evil of ignorance—all of which if they had not sprung up before, spring not up within him, and which had sprung up are put away."

"And what are the evils, which are to be abandoned by insight? This is suffering. This is the origin of suffering. This is the cessation of suffering. This is the way which leads to the cessation of suffering."

"And which are the evils to be abandoned by subjugation?—These: the subjugation of the organs of sight, of hearing, of smell, of taste, of touch, of mind."

"And which are the evils to be abandoned by right use? These: the use of robes to ward off cold, heat, mosquitoes and gad-flies, wind, sun and snakes and to cover his nakedness; the use of alms only to sustain the body in life, the use of abode to ward off cold and heat, etc., and to secure the delight of privacy, the use of medicine to ward off sickness, and to preserve his health."



(12) Kanishka Casket Crystal reliquary with Buddha's relics, etc.



“And which are the evils to be abandoned by endurance? These: patient endurance of cold, heat, hunger, thirst, mosquitoes, gad-flies, wind, sun, and snakes; abusive words, under bodily suffering, utter pain however sharp, rough, severe, unpleasant, disagreeable and destructive even to life. ‘For whereas, brethren, to the man who endureth not, evils may arise, full of vexation and distress; to him who endures, the evils, full of vexation and distress are not.’

“And which, brethren, are the evils to be abandoned by avoidance? These: a rogue elephant, a furious horse, a wild bull, a mad dog, a snake, a stump in the path, a thorny bramble, a pit, a precipice, a dirty tank or pool, a place where one should not sit or walk, bad company.

“And which, brethren, are the evils to be abandoned by removal? These: a lustful thought, an angry thought, a malicious thought, some sinful wrong.

And which, brethren, are the evils to be abandoned by cultivation? These: search after Truth, Energy, Joy, Peace, Earnest Contemplation, Equanimity.

“And when a monk has done all this, he has rolled away every Fetter and he has made an end of Pain.”<sup>(1)</sup>

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#### AVOID BRAHMANS.

“They live on the food provided by the faithful, continue addicted to injuring life, are addicted to storing up property, to witness public shows, theatrical representations, concerts, dancing and singing; employ their time in gambling, dicing, trapball, sketching rude figures, blowing trumpets, ploughing marches, tumbling, forming mimic windmills, sit and sleep on ornamental beds and carpets inwrought with gold and silk, adorn their person and annoint their bodies with fragrant perfumes, repeat tales of kings, of robbers, or of ministers of state, empty tales of things which are and which are not.

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(1) *Sabbhasav Sutta*, 1-39; 11 S. B. E. 296-307.

“ They wrangle and say, ‘ You are ignorant of this doctrine and discipline, but I understand them ! What do you know of doctrine or discipline ? ’ ‘ You are heterodox, but I am orthodox ! ’ ‘ My discourse is profitable, but yours is worthless ! ’ ‘ That which you should speak first, you speak last, and that which you should speak last, you speak first.’

“ They perform the servile duties of a go-between, continue addicted to hypocrisy.

“ They continue to gain a livelihood by such low arts, by such lying practices as these,—that is to say, by divination, by marks on the body, by auguries, by the interpretation of prognostics, of dreams, and of omens, good or bad, by divination from the manner in which cloth and such other things have been bitten by rats, by sacrifices to the god of fire, offerings of *Dub* grass, offerings with a ladle, offerings of husks, of bran, of rice, of clarified butter, of oil, and liquids ejected from the mouth, and by bloody sacrifices, by teaching spells for preserving the body, for determining lucky sites for protecting the fields, for luck in war, against ghosts and goblins, to serve as antidotes for poison, and to cure bites of scorpion or rats, by divination by the flight of hawks, or by the croaking of crows, by guessing at the length of life, by teaching spells to ward off wounds, and by pretended knowledge of the language of beasts, by explaining the good and bad points of jewels, sticks, garments, swords, arrows, bows, weapons of war, women, men, youths, maidens, male and female slaves, elephants, horses, bulls, oxen, goats, sheep, fowls, snipes, iguanas, long-eared creatures, turtle and deer, by fore-telling future events, and the movements of the planets and their effect upon the fortunes of men as that ‘ The eclipse of the moon will have such and such a result.

That there will be an abundant rainfall.’ ‘ There will be famine.’ ‘ There will be tranquillity.’ ‘ There will be disturbances.’ ‘ The season will be sickly,’ ‘ the season will be healthy.’ By giving advice touching the taking in marriage or the giving in marriage, the forming of alliances or the dissolution of connections, ‘ the calling in property, or the



laying of it out, by teaching spells to procure prosperity or to cause adversity to others, to remove sterility, to produce dumbness, locked-jaw, deformity, or deafness, by obtaining oracular responses by the aid of mirror, or from a young girl, or from a god, by worshipping the sun, or by worshipping Brahm, by spitting fire out of their mouths, or by laying hands on people's heads, by teaching the ritual for making vows and performing them, for blessing fields, for impairing virility and rendering impotent, for choosing the site of a house, for performing a house-warming, by teaching forms of words to be used when cleansing the mouths, when bathing, and when making offerings to the god of fire, by prescribing medicines to produce obstructions in the higher or lower intestines, or to relieve head-ache, by preparing oils for the ear, collyriums, catholious antimony, and cooling drinks, by practising cautery, midwifery or the use of root decoctions or salves.”<sup>(1)</sup>

#### UPROOT VICE.

In Kushal a great number of Brahmans and householders were seated together in a playhouse, as was their wont, to hold a chat. “Who are the beings,” some one asked, “who will pass beyond birth and death?” A severe ascetic answered: “They who remain seated for a long time in one place.”<sup>(2)</sup> Another said: “They who make sacrifices and burn offerings.” Then Bhagwat said: “We thank you, Brahmans and citizens; if a dense forest or thick jungle had caught fire and had (afterwards) been soaked by rain (and put out) would it grow again?” “Certainly, Venerable One.” “And why so?” “Because the roots have not been destroyed.” Well, so it is with those who practise severe asceticism, or who remain seated (motionless), passions will spring up afresh, because they have not completely destroyed attachment.”<sup>(3)</sup>

(1) *Teviggā Sutta* Ch. II—1-10; (Pt. 2) seated motionless.

II—1-7; 11. S. B. E. 189-200.

(2) Penance by *Asan* i.e. by remaining.

(3) *Udanvarg* (Trubner), 207.

## BUDDH'S DREAM.

The Great King of Glory possessed seven precious things and was gifted with four marvellous powers. On a Sabbath Day<sup>(1)</sup> having taken a bath and purified himself, he went up to the upper storey of his palace, when there appeared to him the heavenly Treasure of the Wheel<sup>(2)</sup> with its nave, its tyre, and all its thousand spokes complete. He thought to himself. "He who sees this Wheel becomes an invincible King of Kings. May I, then, become a King of Kings invincible?"

He then reverently uncovered from one shoulder his robe, held in his left hand a pitcher, and with his right hand he sprinkled water on the Wheel saying—"Roll onward, O My Lord the Wheel! O My Lord go forth and overcome!"

The Wheel rolled eastwards, and after it, went the King of Glory with his army, and in whatever place the Wheel stopped the King stopped also. There all the rival kings in the regions of the East assembled and welcomed the King saying 'Come, O Mighty King! Welcome, O Mighty King! All is thine, O Mighty King! Do thou, O Mighty King, be a Teacher to us!'

Then spake the Great King of Glory,  
 "Ye shall slay no living thing,  
 Ye shall not take that which has not been given.  
 Ye shall not act wrongly touching the bodily desires.  
 Ye shall speak no lie.  
 Ye shall drink no maddening drink.  
 Ye shall eat as ye have eaten.

They obeyed and became subjects of the Great King of Glory.

The wondrous Wheel having plunged into the great waters in the East, rose up again and rolled onwards to the region of the South and then of the West, and then of the North and there too all happened as had happened in the region of the East.

(1) *Uposath*—a weekly sacred day—Four days of a lunar month, being Full-moon day, New-moon day, and two equidistant intermediate days, *Maha Suddarshan Sutra* I—11; 11 S. B. E. 251 f.n. (2).  
 (2) *Chakra-ratnam*, where the *chakra* is the disc of the Sun.

This wondrous Wheel having thus conquered all the four corners of the compass, returned back to the royal city of Kushvati and remained fixed on the open terrace in front of the entrance to the inner apartment of the Great King of Glory as a glorious adornment.<sup>(1)</sup> Then, before the King of Glory appeared the jewel of an Elephant<sup>(2)</sup> wondrous in power, flying through the sky—the Elephant-King whose name was Uposath.<sup>(3)</sup> The King mounted it to test its wondrous feats, it passed over along the broad earth to its very ocean boundary, and then returned again in time for the morning meal to the Royal city of Kushvati.

Then appeared the jewel of a Horse which could fly through the sky. Its name was "Valhako" (Thunder-cloud). The King rode him, reached the extremity of the earth and was back home for his morning meal.

Then there appeared the best of Gems which lighted up the earth and sky, so that when he marched at the head of his army at night with the gem raised aloft upon his standard-top, the people would shout "The day-light hath appeared."

Then there appeared the glory of Woman graceful in figure, beautiful in appearance, charming in manner and of the finest complexion, of medium figure and height and complexion, never in thought unfaithful, who had attained even unto the beauty of a goddess; pleasant in speech and ever on the watch to hear what she could do to give the King pleasure.

Then there appeared the jewel of a Treasurer<sup>(4)</sup> possessing marvellous power of vision by which he could discover treasure whether it had an owner or whether it had not. To test him the King took him in a boat in midstream of the river Ganges and asked him to produce yellow-gold. He reached down to the water and with both his hands he drew up a jar, full of yellow gold and asked the King "Is that enough?"

(1) *Maha Sudarshan Sutta* Ch. I—1—10;  
11 S. B. E. 247-254.

(2) *Hathi-raja*.

(3) Name for the Buddhist Sabbath.

(4) *Grahpati Ratnam*.

When there appeared the jewel of an Adviser.

These were the seven precious gifts which the Great King of Glory received. But he had four more, namely, beauty of person, long life, health, and popularity with his subjects.

The Great King of Glory then thought that he might build lotus-ponds in the midst of the palms. He then built exquisite lotus-ponds faced with gold, silver, beryl and crystal, and in them he planted flowers of every season, made provision for the convenience of bathers, and made perpetual grant for food and drink and clothes and couches and wines for those who wanted them, gold and money for those in want.

Then the people brought to the King much wealth which the King refused, but the people would not take it back, so he invested it in building a palace of gold-bricks, and named it the Palace of Righteousness. Then he planted a grove of palm trees all of gold at the entrance to the chamber of the great complex. <sup>(1)</sup>

Then he built in front of the Palace of Righteousness a Lotus-Lake to bear the name of Righteousness.

Then occurred to the King the thought "Why I am so mighty and so great? Of what previous character now may this be the fruit, of what previous character the result?"

Then occurred to him the thought. "Of three qualities is this the fruit,—of charity, of self-conquest, and of self-control."

The King then ascended the steps of the Great complex and there standing, he broke out into a cry of great emotion :

" Stay here, O thoughts of lust !  
 Stay here, O thoughts of ill-will !  
 Stay here O thoughts of hatred !  
 Thus far only, O thoughts of lust  
 Thus far only, O thoughts of ill-will !  
 Thus far only, O thoughts of hatred !"

<sup>(1)</sup> *Mahāvastu*.

Then entering the chamber and seating himself upon the golden couch, his mind went through the four *Dhyans*—meditations—and then he passed his mind through the world with thoughts of Love, Pity, Sympathy and Equanimity, then he ordered his Advisors to send in the Royal Elephants not every evening as usual, but at stated times.

Now the Great Queen of Glory had not seen the Great King for a considerable time, so she ordered her chamber-maids to get ready to accompany her to the King. She arrived at his palace with all her retinue ; but as soon as she reached the door the King said : “ Stop there, O Queen, enter not ! ”

The King himself ordered his golden couch to be taken out of the chamber complex and laid under the palm tree where the King lay down. The Queen approached him and reminded him of his Glory, of his gold, his might and power, the innumerable army of retainers, attendants, palaces, gardens, elephants and chariots. But the King bade her not to address him any more in those pleasant phrases, but “ now in this last time, speak in words unpleasant, disagreeable and not to be desired.”

“ How then, O King, shall I address thee ? ” she enquired.

“ Say that I should pass away with no longing for this life or its good things.”

She wept and repeated the words in which he had asked her to address him.

The Great King of Glory then passed away, and he came to life again in the happy world of Brahm.

“ Now you may ask who was that Great King of Glory ? Well, it was I who have appeared here before, seven times and this is now my eighth re-appearance and I die and behold !

“ How transient are all component things !  
Growth is their nature and decay ;  
They are produced and are dissolved again ;  
And then is best, when they have sunk to rest ! ” (1)

## THE DONKEY IN LION'S SKIN.

Once upon a time while Brahm Dutt ruled in Benares, the future Buddha was born in a peasant family, and when he grew up, he lived by tillage.

Now at that time a pedlar moved from village to village, selling his goods which he carried on a donkey's back. As he reached a village his rule was to unload the goods, cover his donkey with a lion's skin and let him loose in the barley fields to graze, so that when the watchmen saw him grazing they dared not go near him mistaking him for a lion.

One day when the pedlar reached a village, and as was his wont he, turned his donkey loose in a barley field, the watchmen ran back to the village and told the villagers that a lion was eating up their barley. Thereupon all the villagers turned out weapons in hands, blowing conches and beating drums and as they approached the field, they raised a shout.

Terrified by the noise, the donkey lost his nerve and brayed. The villagers thereupon rushed up to the donkey and broke his bones by beating. They removed the lion's skin and bore it away. The pedlar then came and looking at his donkey in a bad plight exclaimed, "If only he had'n't brayed." And even when he so spake, the donkey died.<sup>(1)</sup>

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 VAIN SEARCH.

Several rich young men went into a grove to enjoy themselves. They had all their wives except one who had taken a harlot for company. This harlot stole the articles belonging to the party and disappeared.

When the friends learnt of it, they started in search of the harlot; and as they found Gautam seated at the foot of a tree, they turned to him and asked him if he had seen the harlot; at which the Blessed One turning to the young men asked, "What have you to do, young men, with the woman?"

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(1) *Jataka* V, VI. *Panch Tantra* IV-7; Copied in "*Aesop's Fables*"; (Murray)  
*Hitopadeś* III; *Katha Sarit Sagor* 111.

They replied, "We were sporting in this grove; and as one of us had no wife, so we got her, the woman. But as we were indulging in our sports, she ran away. So we are out to find her."

"Now what think you, young men? Which would be better for you;—that you should go in search of a woman, or that you should go in search of yourselves?"

"That, Lord, would be better for us, that we should go in search of ourselves." "If so, young men, sit down, I will preach to you the Truth" (1)

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#### LOVE FOR HATE.

And the Blessed One observed the ways of society and noticed how much came from malignity and foolish offences done only to gratify vanity and self-seeking pride.

And the Blessed One said: "If a man foolishly does me wrong, I will return to him the protection of my ungrudging love; the more evil comes from him, the more good shall go from me; the fragrance of goodness always comes to me and the harmful air of evil goes to him."

A foolish man learned that Buddh observed the principle of great love, which commands to return good for evil; he came and abused him. Buddh was silent, pitying his folly.

The man having finished his abuse, Buddh asked him saying: "Son, if a man declined to accept a present made to him, to whom would it belong?" And he answered: "In that case it would belong to the man who offered it." "My son," said Buddh, "you have railed at me, but I decline to accept your abuse, and request you to keep it yourself. Will it not be a source of misery to you? As the echo belongs to the sound; and the shadow to the substance, so misery will overtake the evil-doer without fail."

(1) M. V. 1-14; 13 S.B.E. 116, 117.

The abuser made no reply, and Buddha continued: "A wicked man who reproaches a virtuous one is like one who looks up and spits at heaven; the spittle spoils not the heaven, but comes back and defiles his own person.

"The slanderer is like one who flings dust at another when the wind is contrary; the dust returns on him who threw it. The virtuous man cannot be hurt, and the misery that the other would inflict comes back on himself."

The abuser went away abashed, but he returned and took refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Law and the Sangha. <sup>(1)</sup>

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#### THE PRODIGAL SON.

There was a house-holder and he had a son who left him. The house-holder made money, while the son lost what he had and became miserably poor. In his wanderings for food and clothing the son chanced to come to the town where his father lived. He saw him and taking pity on his wretchedness and poverty, he ordered some of his servants to call him. The son got frightened and ran away. The father sent his servants again with instructions to deal with him tenderly and he got him employed by a labourer of his own rank and education, so the son did not feel awkward to serve him. The father watched his career from the window of his house, and when he saw that he was honest and industrious, he had him promoted higher and higher.

After many years he summoned his son; called together all his servants and made the secret known to them. Then the son was overjoyed to meet his father. The father trained his son little by little to succeed to him and he then endowed him with all his riches. <sup>(2)</sup>

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(1) *Sutra of Forty-two sections* (Kyoto, Udanvarg (Trubner) 208, 209.  
Japan Carus—LVII. . 145, 146, (2) "*Lotus*" Ch. IV.



## THE TYRANT'S TALE.

There was a great king who oppressed his people and was hated by them; yet when Buddha came into his kingdom, the king was anxious to see him. So he went to see him. The king said to him "O Shakyamuni, can you teach a lesson to the king that might be both interesting and profitable?"

"Yes," replied Gautam, "I shall tell you a story."

"Once upon a time there lived a wicked tyrant whom the god Indra wished to teach a lesson. So he assumed the form of a hunter and taking the demon Matali with him descended to the earth. He made Matali assume the form of a hungry dog of an enormous size. The two together entered the palace and the dog barked so violently that it shook the very foundation of the palace. The king thereupon sent for the hunter and asked him why the dog was making such deafening noise. The hunter said: "The dog is hungry." Whereupon the frightened king ordered food for him. He ate up all and was still barking, when the king ordered all the food prepared for the royal banquet to be given to him. He ate it up and resumed his barking ever as before. More food was given to him, till the royal granaries were empty; but the dog's hunger was unappeased. Then the tyrant grew desperate and asked the hunter "Will nothing save the cravings of that wild beast?" "Nothing," replied the hunter, "nothing, except perhaps the flesh of all his enemies." "And who are his enemies?" enquired the tyrant. "Those who keep the people in the kingdom hungry. So long as they are hungry the dog will be hungry too." The oppressor of the people understood and for the first time began to listen to the teachings of righteousness.

Having ended his story, the Blessed One addressed the king who had turned pale, and said to him:

"The Thathagat can quicken the ears of the powerful, and when thou, great king, hearest the dog bark, you may still learn to pacify the monster." (1)

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(1) *Jataka Tales.*

## THE BITER BITTEN.

A tailor who used to make robes for the brotherhood was given to cheating and prided himself upon his cleverness. But once having to deal with a customer he was himself cheated and ruined. And the Blessed One said: "Hear the story of the tailor as he was in his previous life. This man was then a crane and he lived near a pond which was getting dry in the hot weather. So he went up to the fish therein and said "Don't you see the tank is drying up and you are going to die. Why don't you move to the beautiful lake yonder which never dries up?" "How can we reach there, we cannot fly?" cried the fish piteously. "Oh! if that is your difficulty" said the crane, "I can assist you. I shall take you one by one in my beak and throw you into the lake." But the fish thought to themselves, "What if the crane instead of dropping us into the lake, drop us down into his stomach?" The crane understood their fears and proposed to them to give him a trial, and if he could take and bring back a fish in his beak, then they should trust him, otherwise not. The fish agreed and one big carp decided to offer himself for the test. The crane gently held him in his beak, took him to the lake and showed him its fine water, after which he flew back to the pond and he assured the fish that it was all right, whereupon the fish all agreed to let the crane take them to the lake, which he did; but before dropping them into the lake, he dropped them into his own stomach, near a big Varan tree. Having finished with the fish, he next approached a lobster and proposed to take him safely to the lake. But the lobster said, "I am too big for your beak and you will drop me, if you carried me there." The fact is the lobster had fixed up a ruse of his own. He had said to himself: "I shall ask him to let me cling to his neck. If he dropped me in the lake it would be splendid, but if he didn't I could take my revenge." So he said, "Look here, friend, you cannot carry me in your beak, but we lobsters have a famous grip." If you let me cling to your neck with my claws I shall be glad to go with you." And the crane not seeing that the lobster was trying to outwit him, agreed. So the lobster

safely clung himself to the crane's neck and then called out, "Off with you now."

The crane flew with him to the lake and then turned off towards the Varan tree. "My dear uncle," cried the lobster, "the lake lies that way and you are taking me away from it." "Do you think so?" jested the crane, "am I your dear uncle? I suppose I am your slave to carry you about wherever you please. Now have a look at that heap of fish bones at the foot of that yonder Varan tree. Just as I have eaten them, I intend to eat you as well."

"Oh will you?" quoth the lobster, "then I had better be more careful" and so saying he gave the crane's neck a grip with his claws as with a vice.

Then the crane with tears in his eyes cried to him for mercy. "Oh My Lord, I did not intend to eat you. Grant me my life!"

"Very well! take me first to the lake." And the crane took him as fast as he could fly. And as he lay him down on the mud at its edge, the lobster gave a twist which severed the crane's neck as with a hunting knife.

Then added the Tathagat "Now this tailor was not only outwitted in this life, but in his past life too, and in the same way." (1)

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#### ANCIENT DIOGENES.

There was a Brahman in Kaushambi, a disputant and well-versed in the three Vedas. As he regarded no one as equal to him in debate, he carried about all day a lighted torch in his hand, and when asked for the reason of his strange conduct, he would reply "The world is so dark that I carry this torch to light it up as far as I can."

A Shraman sitting in the market-place heard these words and told him: "My friend, your eyes are blind to the omnipotent rays of the sun, do not call the world dark. Your torch cannot add to its lightness. It only adds to your arrogance."

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(1) *Jatak Tales*, 315.

On this the Brahman asked, "Where is the sun of which thou speakest?"

The Shraman said: "The wisdom of the Tathagat is the sun of the soul. His radiance illumines both by day and night and he who has faith will not lack light on the path to Nirvan where he will inherit bliss everlasting. <sup>(1)</sup>

### THE BURNING MANSION.

There was a wealthy householder who possessed a large mansion. One day it caught fire. The householder ran out of the house and saw that his roof was on fire.

The children were all inside. He said to himself; "What shall I do if I go in to rescue them? They will run away, and while I am saving some, the rest might perish in the flames." Suddenly an idea struck him. "My children love toys—if I tempt them with toys they will all run out to see them." So he shouted, "Children, here are some toys for you more beautiful than you have ever seen. Run up quickly before it is too late." And lo! from the blazing ruins the children rushed out in full haste. The father bought them costly play-things and when they saw their house in flames they praised the resourcefulness of their father, which had saved their lives.

### THE TALKATIVE TORTOISE.

In one of his previous births Buddh was born in a minister's family and when he grew up, he himself became the King's minister. He found the King too talkative and so he told him the following story: "Once upon a time" he said, "there lived a tortoise in a pond in the Himalaya mountains in which there came two swans, who became very friendly with him. They told him that there was a golden cave on Mount Beautiful in the Himalaya mountain, and proposed that all the three should visit it."

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(1) Beal's *Chinese Dhammapad* 46.

"But how can I get there" asked the tortoise. "Easily, by hanging on to a stick with your teeth: we will hold it at each end and carry you. But you must hold your tongue." "O! I can easily do that," said the tortoise, "take me with you."

The swans then brought a twig and the tortoise got hold of it and the swans flew.

As they passed over a village, the villagers shouted "Look, two geese carrying a tortoise dangling on a stick!"

At this the tortoise could not bear the slight. He retorted: "What is it to you, you slaves! if the swans choose to be my carriers?" Having lost grip of the stick, the tortoise fell into the court-yard of a king, broken into two pieces. The king sent for the minister and asked him to explain the mystery.

The minister told him how it came about. The king then asked the minister. "Would he have been saved, if only he hadn't talked?" "Truly, king," spake the minister, "so if people will only hold their tongue, when they should be silent, they wouldn't come to grief."<sup>(1)</sup>

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#### THE JACKAL AND THE CROW.

Once upon a time a jackal saw a crow sitting on the branch of a Jambu tree and eating the Jambu fruit.

"Ha!" thought he, "I'll flatter him and get him to give me some of those Jambus to eat." So he said, "Who is this whose rich and pleasant notes proclaim him the best of all the singing birds, warbling so sweetly on the Jambu branch where he, like a peacock, sits firm and grand?"

The crow was flattered and replied, "Who is that so well-bred, whose shape and glossy coat reveals him a tiger's cub? Eat of these, I pray."

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(1) *Jackal* (Fanshok) No. 215; taken in *Phædrus* II-7; VII-14; *Aesop's Fables* and numerous other books.

Ho shook the branch and down fell ripe Jambu fruit which the jackal ate.

Seeing these two flatterers, the fairy of the tree exclaimed "Too long have I borne the sight of the refuse-eater and the offal-eater blanding each other: begone."<sup>(1)</sup>

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### BUDDH'S JUSTICE.

A woman had bathed her child and laid it on the bank of a tank into which the mother entered to bathe herself. A woman vampire seeing the child, felt a craving to eat it. So she asked the mother if she might nurse her beautiful child. The mother agreeing, the vampire took the child and ran off with it. Seeing this the mother ran after the vampire, but the latter said that the child was hers. So quarrelling, they passed the door of the Bodhisatv who asked them to stop. He asked them what they were quarrelling about. Each told him that the other was claiming her child. "Very well" asked the Bodhisatv, "will you submit to my judgment?" They agreed. He then drew a line and laid the child midway upon it.

He then told the vampire to lay hold of its hands and the mother its legs and asked each to pull it, adding: "The child shall be hers who drags him over the line."

Then each pulled; but as the child began to cry through pain, the mother let it go as she could not bear its pain.

The Bodhisatv said, "Take the child, it is yours." He then asked the vampire why she wanted the child: "To eat it," she replied: "I am a vampire."

The mother blessed the Bodhisatv, and took away her child.<sup>(2)</sup>

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(1) *Jatak* (Fanshall) No. 294 copied in *Æsop's Fables*.

(2) *Jatak* (Fanshall) 546; This is

probably a much older story and occurs in the *Book of Kings*

## CHAPTER XVII

### BUDDHISM AND OTHER FAITHS.

Buddhism is a child of Hinduism, of which it became a sect and afterwards a serious rival. Even as a sect, it differed from it upon its essential tenets—Brahmanism, idolatry, caste, sacrifice and its theory of final deliverance. And yet Buddhism borrowed and adapted its form and method, coquetted with its philosophy and assumed its dogmas in explanation of its own tenets. It battled with Hinduism during its infancy; but as the two became more developed and better organized, Hinduism first weakened its rival by loving embraces and then drove it out of its home by the combined use of force, chicanery and sophistry.

But when Buddha preached his gospel, he was uncompromising in his onslaught on Hinduism. He denounced the sacerdotal pretensions of the Brahman, denied his mediatorship, ridiculed his gods and reviled his philosophy. He had always opposed the pretensions of the caste and its right to determine social inequality. He equally opposed the discrimination between sexes which the Brahmans had heightened into an article of faith; while Buddha would probably have never founded his religion, if he had not to preach to his disciples the futility of sacrifices, penances and self-mortification as the main avenues to salvation. He was, however, by no means prepared at any time to antagonize their philosophy; though speaking for himself, he could see that the Hindu leap from the known to the unknown was only a dogma, which even as a dogma he could not unquestionably accept. While, therefore, he was opposed to the cardinal tenets of Hinduism, he had nonetheless launched his creed under its aegis, just as before him Kapil and Ajit had started their dissenting crusade against the authority of the Vedantic dogma. But his apostasy was in reality far more deep-rooted than the metaphysical subtleties of the founders of the Sankhya and Nastik systems of philosophy. For, while they attacked the Brahmanical speculation, they did not attack

Brahmanism; and while they attacked the theory, they did not oppose the practice of their faith. In other words, while they dug open one artery of Hinduism, they did not care to attack it through its main artery. Buddha, on the other hand, had seized and cut open its main artery with the result that Hinduism fell at his feet moribund and unconscious.

Only a cursory glance at the contemporary records is necessary to give one a faithful picture of the social habits of the time. That the Aryan settlers were addicted to gambling and drinking is only too apparent from the description of the public gaming houses <sup>(1)</sup> and the offering of the spirituous libations to the gods. <sup>(2)</sup> The adulation of the Soma Juice which yielded a highly intoxicating spirit is adulated in the Rig Veda and is the theme of an entire Veda, the Sama Veda, while frequent references to it occur in all the other Vedas. <sup>(3)</sup> It is offered to the gods. That the Aryans killed cows <sup>(4)</sup> and horses <sup>(5)</sup> for food and that fatted calf was a delicacy and offered to an honoured guest is equally apparent.

The respect for cows appears to have grown only in the mediæval age. Even in the Mitakshara composed in the 11th century A.D. its desuetude is assumed to be comparatively recent to so as furnish the author with an apt illustration. <sup>(6)</sup>

(1) *Rigveda* X—34 (describes the woes of the ruined gambler) *Mahabharat* III—59-61 (story of Nala who lost his kingdom as a stake in a game with his brother. He went into exile with his devoted wife Damayanti).

*Mrichchhakatik*, drama of King Sudrak (2nd Act describes the gamblers' quarrels).

(2) 2 *Rig-Ve*'a (Wilson's Tr.) p. 204: *Ramayan* III, (Bharadwaj entertained Bharat, brother of Rama to liquor); *Mahabharat*, (Adi Parva) Arjun regales himself with spirituous liquor on the Raivata mountain); *Taittiriya Sanhita* (1st part).

(3) 1. *Rig-Veda*, I-I—2; I-II—4. "The chanters of the *Sama* extol Indra with songs, the reciters of the *Rik* with prayers; the priests of the *Yajus* with texts." (Wilson's Tr. p. 8) *Ib.* I-xiv—9 "Soma" deified (Wilson pp. 139, 140); IV-iv—2.

(4) *Manu* III—119, 120; V—35, 41, 42; Gour's *Hindu Code* (3rd Ed.) Introduction—Para. 67; *Charak* (Ch. on Food and drinks; says beef should not be eaten

daily); *Taittiriya Brahman* II—65; (enumerates 180 animals including cows as fit for sacrifice) *Krishna Yajur Veda* III-ch. VIII (describes the varieties of cows as fit sacrifices to different gods (i.e.g., a draught bull is a fit offering to Vishnu; and a thick-legged cow to Indra.

(5) *Rig-Veda* I—21; 6; II—12.

(6) *Mitakshara* I—III-4. "The question is thus answered: True, this unequal partition is found in the sacred ordinances; but it must not be practised, because it is abhorred by the world; since that is forbidden by the maxim 'Practise not that which is legal but is abhorred by the world, for it secures not celestial bliss: "as the practice of offering bulls is shunned on account of popular prejudice, notwithstanding the injunction 'Offer to a venerable priest a bull or a large goat'; and as the slaying of a cow is for the same reason disused, notwithstanding the precept 'Slay a barren cow as a victim consecrated to Mitra and Varuna.'"



The family life was patriarchal in which the wives and children were accounted as chattels, and the former as the sole machinery for procreation. The Ashvamedh sacrifice hallowed by age, had at first for its objective the attainment of wealth and prosperity, to which was soon added fecundity to secure which the queen herself had to lie all night in closest contact with the dead steed. <sup>(1)</sup> The spirituallife had ceased to count ; since salvation could be obtained by the vicarious means of sacrifice and the meditation of Brahmans. Sound symbolised by the *Mantras* had acquired a greater potency than deeds. It wrought miracles, charmed the gods, exorcised the evil spirits, cured ailments and brought under control the Cosmic energy. Caste had become sufficiently crystallised to clip the wings of individual ambition. It sufficed to keep each man in his place. It thwarted the economic law of competition and incidentally acted as a soporific to social development. It had given hostages to any concerted movement for the amelioration of social order which was divinely ordained, interference with which was regarded as intolerable sacrilege. It was against this human inertness brought about by the concourse of circumstances, that Buddhism took up the cudgels. It was a movement as thoroughly revolutionary as cataclysmic in its outlook and range as has ever stirred any people in the history of mankind. And it was all the work of a single man.

But that was neither his primary, nor even his main purpose. He never adverted to the social side of Hinduism and he did not intend to root out its social evils ; for, Buddh was not a social reformer. The fact is that social reform of the people amongst whom he lived never entered his thoughts, nor was he a conscious feminist. To him, life was a suffering irremediable, otherwise than by the means of deliverance he had given. To him, the perpetuation of society by adding to its amenities would itself have been an intolerable wrong, since it would have led to the prolongation of human suffering. Buddh was, therefore, an anti-socialist : To him—" All created things are grief and pain, he who knows and sees this, becomes passive in pain : this is the

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(1) *Yajur Veda* 22, 26 ; See 2 Wilson's *Rig Veda* Introduction p. viii.

way that leads to purity.”<sup>(1)</sup> To him, the life he loved was not the life of a householder, but that of a Bhikkhu ; but, unlike the Hindu ascetic, he did not want his monks to lead the lives of social recluses. On the other hand, being the missionary torch-bearers of his faith, it was their duty to educate the masses and teach them the cardinal of his creed. The Buddhists thus became the pioneers of mass education and their disciples were the founders of two great universities as far apart as Nalanda and Taxila and the disseminators of learning through their numerous monasteries and preachers who scoured the country to propagate the gospel and popularize its tenets.

Buddh had, of course, no innate prejudice against Brahmans because they were Brahmans. He eulogized Brahmans of the earlier age who had preached chastity and virtue, rectitude, mildness, penance, tenderness, compassion and patience. “ Having asked for rice, beds, garments, butter and oil, and gathered them justly, they made sacrifices out of them, and when the sacrifice came on, they did not kill cows.”<sup>(2)</sup> “ But there was a change in them ; after gradually seeing the King’s prosperity and adorned women, well-made chariots drawn by noble horses, carpets in variegated colours, palaces and houses divided into compartments and measured out : the great human wealth, attended with a number of cows, and combined with a flock of beautiful women, the Brahmans became covetous and then the King, the Lord of chariots, instructed by the Brahmans..... made sacrifices and having offered these sacrifices, he gave the Brahmans wealth, cows, beds, garments, and adorned women and well-made chariots drawn by noble horses, carpets in variegated colours, beautiful palaces, well-divided into compartments, and having filled these with different (sorts of) corns, he gave this wealth to the Brahmans ; and they, having thus received wealth, wished for a store, and the craving of those who had given way to (their) wishes increased still more ; they then, in this matter, having composed hymns, sent again to Okkhak, and said, “ As water, earth, gold, wealth, and corn, even so are these cows for men, for this is a requisite for

(1) *Dham.* XX-278 ; 10 S.B.E. 60.

(2) *Kulvagga* 12 ; 10 S.B.E., (Pt. 2) 48.

living beings ; sacrifice, (for) great is thy wealth.”<sup>(1)</sup> And the King sacrificed cows, and so Dhamm was lost, and the Brahmins became degraded. In this discourse Buddh shows how the Brahmins began well, but eventually yielded to cupidity and how they became mercenary and by inventing sacrifices were feathering their own nests at the expense of their wealthy patrons, whom they professed to offer salvation in return for their munificent gifts in the guise of sacrifices. He took a warning from their mis-deeds and therefore, provided for the strictest life of penury and poverty for his disciples.

But it was not the only point of difference with the Brahmins. In their selfish greed, they had become a closed corporation and created caste, thereby undermining the very roots of social equality and social fair-play. Buddh became, therefore, opposed to their institution of caste.

“ Who is a Brahman ? ” he was asked. And he said : “ A man does not become a Brahman by his plaited hair, by his family or by birth ; in whom there is truth and righteousness, he is blessed, he is a Brahman.”<sup>(2)</sup> A Brahman is a degree, not a caste ; a status and not a birth-right. It depends upon his virtue and his deeds and not upon his observance of ceremonials or calling. Buddh had always appealed to man’s reason. He would not permit his disciples to take anything for granted, because it was given to them on high authority, even his own, though of course they never questioned it. But the fact remains that he was wholly opposed to the *ipse dixit* of the laity by enslaving their mind, by denying them the right to study the scriptures and then indoctrinating them in their all pervading dogmas, so that they were unable to move without consulting the omens and obtaining auspicious signs from the Brahmins. It is they who held the mainsprings of their daily lives—whether they were to marry, whom to marry, when to marry, what to eat and what to avoid, when to travel and when to touch, in fact, no act or movement of theirs could be performed nor any work however trivial undertaken without the guidance of the Brahmins.

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<sup>(1)</sup> *Kulvaggā* 16-26 ; 10 S. B. E.      <sup>(2)</sup> *Dharm* XXVI—393 ; 10. S. B. E. 91.  
(Pt. 2). 49, 50.

This life-long shackling of one's life to the auguries of the priestcraft makes the life of a Hindu one of continuous suspense, dread and suffering. It is against this that Buddhism had first launched its main attack. The Brahmans had created a monopoly of their own caste. Buddha destroyed that monopoly. The Brahmans had denied that any one except them were privileged to read the sacred books. Buddha denied their right and told his disciples that their most sacred scriptures were inscribed on their own brains and that there could be no monopoly in the holy writ. The Brahmans had peopled the universe with gods and demons—the latter preponderating. Men, according to them, were the sport of these evil spirits and the only means of escaping their evil influence was through the good offices of the Brahmans. Buddha denied that he was subject to any superior force outside his own self. He asseverated that his destiny, immediate and future, lay in his own hands. And he thus freed men from the demoralizing fear of imaginary ghosts and goblins which had imbued their lives with an all-pervading uncertainty, trembling and fear, which is the root cause of the debasing pessimism of Indian philosophy.

To Buddha, therefore, India, and indeed the world, was indebted for the first rise of rationalism as a protest against the superstitions of religion. It is he, who emancipated man from the thralldom of the priest. It is he, who first showed him the way to free himself from the toils of sanctimonious hypocrisy and the sanctulotes of religion. To the Brahmans no religion was higher than the religion of sacrifice to the gods; to him no religion could be more humiliating to the gods or degrading to man. A sacrifice is nothing more than bribery, and salvation won by bribery and corruption is not a salvation which any self-respecting man would care to get. And this was the be-all and the end-all of Brahmanical Hinduism.

But in this respect Buddha fought against sacerdotism, but not Hinduism, with the philosophy of which he had much sympathy, though he was not able to agree with its arch keynote of a supreme Brahm from which all things emanated and

into which they finally returned. He was not equally sure that the world was a delusion (a Maya) and that nothing existed beyond the dream of the dreamer. The Hindu system was deductive, his own method was inductive. The Hindu argued from cause to the effect; Buddh proceeded in the inverse order and desired to proceed from the known to the unknown. Both lines of ratiocination have their faults—the one created pre-conception; the other takes you to the blind wall. Buddh preferred the blind wall to a pre-conception. He was himself unable to answer such questions: Is life eternal? Is the world eternal? Had it a beginning? Has it an end? He regarded these questions as beyond his ken and he evaded the inquirer's curiosity by limiting them to the unknown; but in so doing, he escaped from the Scylla of the Brahm, but fell into the Charibdis of his own Nirvan, which he could not reconcile with eternity, but without which it ceased to have any meaning. It is more than probable, that an acute thinker as he was, he had come to the logical end of his own induction, which he must have explained to his select disciples; but to the generality of them, he did not convey his disquieting conclusions.

That Buddhism had both an exoteric and an esoteric doctrine is now admitted on all hands. The latter had for its text book the work known as *Satdharma Pundarik* (or "The Great Lotus of the Good Law") which, though exoteric in form, contains an undercurrent of esotericism which only those who have graduated in the outer school are intellectually equipped to understand.

It was not long, however, before these lacunæ of his system were made good by his later disciples, who assimilated their own system to that of the Brahmans, from whom they bodily borrowed their whole system of ontology; and the later Buddhists even transformed their symbolism by adapting it to their own creed. In this way the *Yoge* of Bramhanism became the *Dhyan* of Buddhism, and the latter, like the former, were held to lead to the acquisition of supernatural powers and the performance of miracles which were imputed to Buddh, when it became necessary to bolster up his divinity against the attractions of the Hindu pantheon. It does not appear that

these developments of the newer system were the work of a day or of a century. They appear to have been slowly and gradually engrafted upon older Buddhism under the pressure of successive waves of revivalism.

In order to give a verisimilitude of immortality to the concept of Nirvan, the existence of a supreme Brahm and a heaven appears to have become necessary even in Buddh's own life-time and if he did not accept that notion, he certainly did nothing to discourage it. Moreover, he had himself to accept the Upanishad-system of epistemology by ascribing to intuition the source of true knowledge. His "name and form" in the doctrine of causation is nothing more than the "*Nam-rup*" of Brahmanical philosophy intended to denote spirit and matter combined in an individual. Nor can his chain of causation be complete without the two additional Brahmanical links of *karm* and metempsychosis. Even in his own chain, the root cause of causation being Ignorance, it is said to produce *Sanskar* or action. Now this term is borrowed from the Sankhya system of philosophy, according to which ignorance produces dispositions on the inner organ reproduced in future life. But he was not a docile disciple of Kapil and did not accept his irreconcilable assumptions as to matter and spirit, though he accepted his conception of the constant process of Nature as ruled by causality. Further he was not prepared to go. For instance, he could not subscribe to the Sankhya doctrine of nature as an ultimate reality, whence evolution takes place; nor of its *Guns* or constituents of being; nor could he concede to the Sankhya the assumption that the whole process of evolution of nature is unconscious save through reflection or other contact with spirit. But whatever be his indebtedness both to the *Yoge* or Kapil's system of cosmology, the one outstanding fact by which Buddhism was able to survive the cold intellectualism of those systems was the superiority of its ethical system, which received the personal stimulus from its founder's example.

The question how far Buddh borrowed from or conceded to the tenets of Jainism can be easily answered. That religion,

like his own, was the product of that intellectual ferment which has made Buddh's age so conspicuous in the religious thought of the world. The history of the founders of Confucianism and Taoism in China has already been given.<sup>(1)</sup> It remains to refer to Jainism as an off-shoot of the ancient system from which Buddhism itself was evolved. Like Buddh, Mahavir a kinsman of Buddh's, the founder of Jainism, denied the divine origin and infallibility of the Vedas; and like him, he held that certain saints have, by a life of purity and penance, attained not only to an equality with, but even superiority over, the Hindu divinities. He likewise held to the doctrines of *karm* and the transmigration, and consequently showed excessive regard for all forms of animal life. The word Jain is derived from *Jin*—which means "victor" and the Jains believe in the *Jins* or saints who have won over all human passions and infirmities and have thus become exalted to the status of gods. These are limited to 72 of whom 24 Tirthankars (or deified mortals) belong to the past age, 24 to the present age, while the remaining 24 have still to appear. Mahavir was the twenty-fourth; and, therefore, the last of the present race of saints, while his immediate predecessor was Parasnath whose creed Mahavir professed to revive and expound. All these saints are worshipped under various honorific titles such as *Jagatprabhu* (or Lord of the world), *Kshin-karm* (or "free from ceremonial acts"), *Adishwars* ("Supreme Lords"), *Devatthidevas* ("gods of gods"), *Tirthankars* ("Those who have crossed the sea of life") and *Jins* (or "victors"). Of the twenty-four deified saints, there is reason to hold that only Parasnath and Mahavir were historical personages, their predecessors being mythical and said to have lived for millions of years. Life is subject to innumerable re-incarnations, but after purification, as in the Buddhist system, it finally reposes in *Nirvan*, which is not annihilation on the one hand, nor absorption in the Brahm on the other, but a mere unceasing apathy producing supreme felicity. So far they and the Buddhists are at one.

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(1) p.p. 225-261 ante ch. XI.

But the Jains differ from them in two important respects—namely, they postulate the existence of Soul not only in man but in all living creatures; and secondly, they regard their goal of Nirvan attainable as much by the practice of mortification, as by the acquisition of knowledge. And it is on this vital subject of mortification that Jainism joined issue with Buddhism, and it is on that ground that Dev Dutt, when he joined hands with the Jains to chastise Buddha and his disciples, denounced them as easy-going pleasure-loving divines.

Buddha had, therefore, to withstand the dual attack from the Hindus and the Jains when he denounced self-mortification as the avenue to salvation.

It appears that Jainism was at one time a serious menace to Buddhism. It had no philosophic system of its own and the system it compiled does not call for serious notice. The Jains divided all existence into Jiv and Ajiv, that is life and not-life. The former are of two kinds; those that move, and those that cannot. To the class of moving Jivs belong men, animals, demons and gods. All these are subject to the law of *Karm*: their future lives will be higher or lower according to the quality of their actions in this life. This doctrine coincides with that of Hinduism and from this both Buddha and Mahavir had evidently received their inspiration.

The second division of existence is *Ajiv* (or non-living) which includes, time, space and religion. Religious merit determines the course of virtue and *Pap* (sin), of which there are 1,082 and mostly comprise non-observance of caste-rules. The objective of all sentient life is *Moksh* or Salvation, and this, as already stated, is attained in Nirvan.

All human passions flow from the organs of sense (*Āsran*); while man is endowed with *Samvar* or a power by which acts are aided or hindered, e.g., attention, secrecy, patience, asceticism and the like; while *Banḍh* ("union") is the life in union which acts, (*Karm*) as milk with water—the final purpose of life being attained by *Moksh* (Salvation) which is the liberation of the vital spirit from the bonds of action causing cessation



from re-births and the final repose of the soul in eternal Nirvan already described.

The Jains are now divided into two rival sects, the Digambar<sup>(1)</sup> (or "space or sky-clad") and Shwetambar<sup>(2)</sup> (or white-robed). The former are the older sect and their most outstanding peculiarity was that they went about absolutely naked, believing in the sanctity of nakedness or as typifying their freedom from all earthly ties and consequent re-birth. Megasthenes said that the Jains were going about naked and so described them as Gymnosophists (or the naked friars). They were then called "*Niganths*" (or "free from bonds") and are so referred to both in the Hindu and Buddhist scriptures.

Professor Jacobi, the highest authority on Jainism, thus compares it to Buddhism: "Mahavir was rather of the ordinary class of religious men in India. He may be allowed a talent for religious matters, but he possessed not the genius which Buddha undoubtedly had. The Buddha's philosophy forms a system based on a few fundamental ideas, whilst that of Mahavir scarcely forms a system, but is merely a sum of opinions on various subjects, no fundamental ideas being there to uphold the mass of metaphorical matter. Besides this,.....it is the ethical element, that gives to the Buddhist writings their superiority over those of the Jains. Mahavir treated ethics as corollary and subordinate to his metaphysics with which he was chiefly concerned." And it is the inherent defect of Hinduism which it shared with its god-child.

Besides these two ancient faiths, Buddhism had in its inception to encounter no other opposition. There were a few animists with their abode in the forests, whom Buddha successfully reclaimed; and for six hundred years till the advent of Christianity, it was the only missionary religion which held sway in the then great Empires of Asia.

It appears to have materially influenced the thought of eastern Europe. The communication between the two continents in those days was more intimate than is ordinarily

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(1) Dig—universe, sky; Ambar—clothes. (2) Shwet—white, Ambar—clothes.

believed; and Buddhist doctrines are known to have deeply affected religious thought in Alexandria and Palestine; and it is still a question how far the Buddhist ideal of the holy life, with its monks, nuns, relic-worship, bells, and rosaries, confessional practice and its ritual, influenced Christian monachism, and to what extent Buddhist philosophy aided the development of the Gnostic heresies, particularly those of Basilides and Manes, which rent the early Church. "It is certain that the analogies are striking, and have been pointed out alike by Jesuit missionaries in Asia, and by Oriental scholars in Europe. The form of adjuration for those who renounced the Gnostic doctrines of Manes, expressly mentions Buddh and the Scythian or Shakyas. At this moment, the Chinese in San Francisco assist their devotions by the pictures of the Buddhist goddess of mercy imported on thin paper from Canton, which the Irish Roman Catholics identify as the Virgin Mary with the infant in her arms, with an aureole round her head, an adoring figure at her feet, and the spirit hovering in the form of a bird". <sup>(1)</sup> "It is difficult to enter a Japanese Buddhist temple without being struck by analogies to the Christian ritual on the one hand, and to Hinduism on the other. The chantings of the priests, their bowing as they pass the altar, their vestments, rosaries, bells, incense, and the responses of the worshippers remind one of the Christian ritual."

"The temple at Rokugo," writes a recent traveller in a remote town in Japan, "was very beautiful, and except that its ornaments were superior in solidity and good taste, it differed little from a Romish church. The low altar, on which were lilies and lighted candles, was draped in blue and silver; and on the high altar, draped in crimson and cloth of gold, there was nothing but a closed shrine, an incense-burner and a vase of lotuses. <sup>(2)</sup>

In a Buddhist temple, the Chinese goddess of Mercy, Kwan-yin, whose resemblance to Virgin Mary and child has already been mentioned, is seen standing on a serpent, bruising his head

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<sup>(1)</sup> Web. *Hist. Ind. Lit.* 309 note; 363; 295; quoted in Hunter's *Indian Empire* 195.

<sup>(2)</sup> Miss Bird's *Unbeaten Tracts in Japan*,

with her heel.”<sup>(1)</sup> The intimate connection of Persia and Greece with Western India is amply supported by historical records. The Greek connection with India began in 600 B.C. when the Greek mariners used to enter the mouth of the Indus with a view to discover its source. Scylax of Caryanda, a Greek Sea Captain, was employed by King Darius (522-486 B.C.) to explore the course of the Indus. <sup>(2)</sup> He wrote a book from which Aristotle quoted the statement that among the Indians the kings were held to be of a superior race to their subjects. <sup>(3)</sup> His book otherwise records wild travellers’ tales. Hecataeus of Miletus wrote a work before 500 B.C. in which he refers to Gandhars and the Indus; a few years later Herodotus wrote his History and borrowed from Hecataeus his description of the course of the Indus. About this time, the peacock was introduced from India into Greece *via* Babylon mentioned in that connection in the Buddhist Jataka <sup>(4)</sup>, while Homer mentions its tin, and other writers, its ivory. Ctesias of Cnidus, a Greek physician resided for seventeen years at the Court Physician in Persia (415-397 B.C.); his account of India rivals in marvel that given by Scylax and gave the Greeks an impression that India was a land of hideous monsters and strange poisons, though it abounded in gold and gems <sup>(5)</sup>.

But the wide gates of truer knowledge were flung open with the influx of the Greeks who accompanied Alexander’s army, which was as much an expedition of research as of conquest. There is no reliable evidence on record to show whether these Greek adventurers took any interest in the religion and ethnology of India; but we have the best evidence of the invasion of Alexander who delivered his attack on the Raja of Taxilla. The gates of this city were thrown open to the army of Alexander and the people crowded to see the strange faces and garbs of the Yavanas. Alexander was accompanied by several philosophers and historiographers, amongst them

(1) Sir C. Eliot’s 3 *Hinduism and Buddhism* 435 f. n. (1); J. E. Harrison, *Prolog. to the study of Greek Religion* XI and App.

(2) *Herodotus* IV—44.

(3) *Politics* VII—14.

(4) Levi’s collection of *Bavru Jataka* No. 389.

(5) *Cambridge Ancient India*—I—397.

one by name Onesicritus, a disciple of the cynic philosopher—Diogenes whom Alexander sent to interview the Indian ascetics who walked about naked in the town, and one of them called by the Greeks—Kalanos<sup>(1)</sup> had a debate with the Greek philosopher through interpreters and an interview with Alexander himself<sup>(2)</sup>.

That the religious thought of India had leavened the pre-Christian beliefs of Europe is testified to by the pages of history. As early as 1,400 B.C., the Thracians adored deities with Indian names.<sup>(3)</sup> Pythagoras had visited Egypt which had adopted the doctrine of metempsychosis from India about 500 B.C.<sup>(4)</sup> After about 530 B.C., the Persian Empire extended from the valley of the Nile and from Macedonia to Babylon, and the army of Xerxes, defeated at Marathon, included Indian soldiers. And after the return of Alexander, the Hellenistic Kings ruled over his Empire and the Bactrian Kings ruled over the Punjab and other adjacent provinces for at least over a hundred years (200-95 B.C.) and one of them—Menander, even became a convert to Buddhism (180-160 B.C.). Seleucus Nicator sent Megasthenes as his envoy to Chandragupt at Pataliputra about 302 B.C. and he was an observant Greek and recorded all he saw. Though his memoirs are partially lost, there can be no doubt that Buddhism must have been the subject of his deep study and that he must have carried home its knowledge to enlighten his countrymen.

Megasthenes was followed by Dionysius sent by Ptolemy Philadelphus (285-247 B.C.) while Bindushar, father of Ashoke, had exchanged missions with Antiochus, and according to a well known anecdote offered to buy a professor. But Antiochus replied that Greek professors were not for sale.<sup>(5)</sup>

(1) A corruption of "Kalyan," meaning "Hail" a form of acclamation converted into a name.

(2) Plutarch's *Alexander* 65; Strabo XV—714f; *Cambridge Indian History*—Volume I, 358-39.

(3) Sir C. Eliots' 3 *Hinduism and*

*Buddhism*, p.434.

(4) Flinders Petrie *Personal Religion in Egypt before Christianity*.

(5) Hegesindros in *Athenaeus* 14-652; V.Smith, *Early History of India* (3rd Ed.) 147.

Ashoke in his edict (256-B.C.) recited the fact that he had spread the Dhamm as far as the dominions of Antiochus, where dwelt the four kings named Ptolemy, Antiochus, Magas, and Alexander. These kings have been identified to be the rulers of Syria, Egypt, Macedonia, Cyrene and Spirus. Alberuni, the Arabian historian of the eleventh century, states that in former times Khurasan, Persia, Irak (Mesopotamia), Koshul and the country up to the frontiers of Syria, were Buddhistic.<sup>(1)</sup> An Indian Colony from the Punjab settled down in Parthia and thence shifted to Armenia (149-127 B.C.), <sup>(2)</sup> and another Indian Colony was settled at Alexandria at the time of Trajan (b. 98 A.D. d. 117 A.D.). In 21 A.D. Augustus while at Athens received an embassy from India which came *via* Antioch. It was accompanied by a person called Zamanochegas, probably a corruption of Saman Achary, an Indian from Bargaosa who astonished the Athenians by publicly burning himself alive. <sup>(3)</sup> He was probably a Bhikkhu as his name suggests.

India had even a much earlier and closer connection with Babylon, and Babylon had a similar connection with Egypt which was the distributing centre for all Europe. Amarna testify to the antiquity and intimacy of this connection. The Jews were taken prisoners by the Babylonians and released in 538 B.C. with their religious horizon enlarged and modified by the Zoroastrian religion which is only a form of the ancient Vedic faith.<sup>(4)</sup>

But this is not all,—Hindu gods were actually worshipped both in Egypt and in Rome at least 300 years before the advent of the Christian era. The worship of Magna Mater was known in Rome before 200 B.C., and that of Isis and Serapis in the time of Sulla, the Dictator (138-78 B.C.). In the early centuries of the Christian era, Mithra was worshipped not only in Rome but in most parts of Europe and with the infiltration of Oriental ideas the Indian monasticism made its way into Europe where tenets similar to those preached by Gautam became current.

(1) Alberuni's—*India* (Tr. E. G. Sachan) Vol. I.—21.

(2) (1907) *J. R. A. S.* 908.

(3) *Strabo* XV. 73; *Dion Cassius* IX—58.

(4) See General Introduction. p. 11,12

Buddh began to exercise the thoughts of philosophers and religious preachers. The theories of metempsychosis and ascetism are both purely Indian, but they both migrated to Europe and became the tenets of societies and communities of cosmopolitan tastes such as the Orphic societies.

Indeed, the Indian religions had become so widely known in Europe about the dawn of Christianity that we find Bardesanes, one of the Gnostic teachers (233-155 B.C.), writing a book on Indian religions in which he mentions the doctrine of *Karm* and the pre-existence of the soul. Bardesanes and Carpocrates were both teachers at Alexandria, and though their works have perished and are known by reference to them by their opponents, there is enough in them to shew that Bardesanes regarded suffering as inherent to existence and believed in re-incarnation as induced by *Karm*. And even St. Paul believed in it, and referred to it in his Epistles to the Romans in which he says: "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died." (1) A few years later, Mani (215-276 A.D.) a native of Ecbatana founded a sect known as Manichæism which was closely allied to Buddhism. Mani had travelled through Afghanistan, Bactria and India, and his disciples carried his faith to Central Asia and China, while in the West it became the faith of the Bogomils and Albigenes. Considerable light has been thrown on the tenets of this sect by recent discoveries of Manichæan manuscripts in Central Asia, one of which, a treatise discovered at Tunhunag is in the form of a Buddhist Sutt and speaks of Mani as the Tathagat and of Buddha as Transformation (Huafo) and the Bodhisatv (Ti-tsang). Even more important is the confessional formula found in the same locality which is similar to the Patimoksh and refers to Buddha, the Shamuni and the Bo tree, uses Buddhist terminology and forbids the taking of life, praises celibacy, poverty and fasting, all of which are foreign to the religions of Persia and Babylon.

Another religious teacher from the West, Apollonius is said to have visited India in search of its religion and his views

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(1) Rom. VII—9.

also conform to the Buddhistic tenets. Plotinus equally held the same view and urged that the world was not the creation of the evil one but was transitory, imperfect and unreal. His system has been called dynamic pantheism, because while admitting God to be the source of energy, He is described as devoid of all qualities and so powerless to control its movements. Plotinus holds fasting, meditation detachment and inaction as the highest morality in life, the objective of which is ecstasy obtainable in union with God. In life such ecstasy can be obtained, but it is not permanent, though it is a solatium to the pilgrims life. It is only after death, when impelled by virtue, that the soul within enters the universal soul and eternal ecstasy is possible.

The question of Buddho-Christian analogues has given rise to a voluminous literature. <sup>(1)</sup>. Similarly Sallastius (300 A.D.) upheld metempsychosis as demonstrable.

Since the tenets of Buddhism have become widely known in Europe and America, scholars have naturally become curious to examine the coincidences between the two religions, and with accumulation of evidence, made possible by the translation of the Buddhist canon, an active controversy has sprung up whether Christian ethics is not the god-child of Buddhism. There are those who entertain no doubt in the matter, and, as was to be expected, there are others who see in the parallelisms nothing beyond accidental coincidences, while there is an intermediate opinion, which while not tracing the evolution of the later to the older religion, still cannot avoid the conclusion that it did influence the evolution of Christianity. This view is voiced by Sir Charles Eliot, who while finding no evidence of Christ having been brought into a contact with the communities

(1) G. A. van den Bergh van Eysinga. *Indische Einflüsse auf evangelische Erzählungen*. Göttingen, 1904. (A revised edition and translation of *Indische invloeden op oude christelijke verhalen*. Leiden, 1901).

G. Faber, *Buddhistische und Neutestamentliche Erzählungen. Das Problem ihrer gegenseitigen Beeinflussung untersucht*. Leipzig, 1913.

Among earlier works may be mentioned:

R. Seydel, *Das Evangelium von*

Jesu in seinen Verhältnissen zu Buddh. Saga and Buddh.-Lehre mit fortlaufender Rücksicht auf andere Religionskreise untersucht Leipzig, 1882.

A. Lillie, *The influence of Buddhism on primitive Christianity*—London, 1893. (Issued in a new edition as *India in primitive Christianity*, 1909).

A. J. Edmunds and M. Anesaki. *Buddhist and Christian Gospels, being Gospel Parallels from Pali Texts*. 4th Ed. Philadelphia, 1908-9.

holding pro-Buddhist views, holds that their ideals were known to him and influenced his own. <sup>(1)</sup>

That Christ has erected the Buddhist ethics upon Judaic foundation appears to admit of little doubt. This explains the difference in their metaphysics but the identity of other views. The Brahmanical conception of the deity had passed through the same earlier stages as the Hebrew conception, but while the latter did not go beyond the Kingship analogy, the Upanishads carried it further into a cosmic pantheism: "Thou art I, and I am thou" became his formula. Christ applied it to himself and reconciled it by having recourse to the doctrine of incarnation, <sup>(2)</sup> used in the same sense in which Buddhists explained their Teacher's descent from the Tushit heaven, though John seemed to have stuck to the Vedic view of Creation wholly out of keeping with the Mosaic cosmogony. <sup>(3)</sup>

Buddh was not content to erect his religion upon the old foundation. He rejected alike the doctrine of a personal and an impersonal God of which he could not find sufficient evidence. Having rejected this old foundation, he had to anchor his ethics on the empiric theory of human suffering to which he called in aid the combined and inseparable doctrines of Karm and reincarnation. It enabled him to evolve a self-contained system, but in his effort to escape from one dogma, he fell into another; but the light of reason which had dismissed the one equally dismissed the other. His later disciples must have early realized it and finding their position untenable, they readily restored the rejected doctrines of their Master and filled in the hiatus which his system had left un-resolved. Thus his ethics remained, but it was balanced by the older doctrines of Brahm and Soul; but the attributes of Brahm had never been satisfactorily defined and the religious preacher knew that the people will not readily accept what they are taught but what they themselves believe. The best of religions must yield to the popular cry. It must yield to simplicity of comprehension and the force of instinct. A monotheistic system had always this in its favour and it became substituted

(1) 3 *Hinduism and Buddhism* 436.

Col. II—9.

(2) 2 *Phillip* 5-9; 2 *Cor.* VIII—9;

(3) *John* I—14.



for the agnostic metaphysics. Local and communal sentiment did the rest. It let in more gods, more saints, more dogmas, more ceremonies. They combined to make the neo-Buddhism of the Mahayans which readily spread through the continent of Asia.

The same forces have made Christianity what it is to-day. Sects have multiplied, new sects are formed. The new is attempted to be reconciled with the old, and in the end humanity will be none the wiser for all the speculation and effort to unveil the inscrutable mystery of life. What are we and where do we go?—These are problems upon which science and dogma have not yet been, and humanly speaking, can never be reconciled. The religions of all nations have struggled to evolve a system supplementing the conclusions of Reason with Faith, and we have therefore to inquire how far the latter embody principles which have become the common heritage of mankind.

An examination of the primitive beliefs of the two nations which have contributed to the stock of human faiths, of the two great Teachers who have founded their world-religions, shows that neither had written his doctrine upon a clean slate. We have seen how far the older Teacher had assimilated some of the dogmas of his own religion. We now proceed to inquire to what extent the founder of Christianity had done the same.

The history of the pre-Christian theology is the history of the religious beliefs of the Israelites <sup>(1)</sup> which marks three distinct stages in their religious history. We have in the first instance the Babylonian king of Egypt, under whom the Hebrews lived and worshipped one God called Yahweh <sup>(2)</sup> who appears to have been the Babylonian god worshipped as far back as 2000 B.C. Moses made him the god of Israel and so laid the foundation of a national unity which was still then lacking. In so selecting one God for worship by his tribe, Moses laid the foundation of monotheism; but it was then

(1) Jews, Hebrews, Israelites are different names for the same people.

(2) *Jahnuer*, then *Jehovah*.

only monolatry, and not monotheism. He recognized the existence of other gods but backed his own against them.

In 588 B.C. Jerusalem fell to Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, (604-561 B.C.) who ordered its evacuation and himself removed as prisoners bulk of the people of Judah to Chaldea. The Jews had been since a subject race for fifty years. They remained so under the Chaldeans and when a few years later Babylon itself fell to the Persians (538 B.C.), the Jews became subject to Persia, who permitted some of them to return. Two hundred years later, both they and their masters passed under Greek domination when Jerusalem had to surrender to the victorious forces of Alexander the Great (332 B.C.), who invited them to settle in his new city of Alexandria. On the death of Alexander in 323 B.C. Palestine fell to the lot of one of his successors to whom Egypt was assigned. It remained under Egypt until 198 B.C. when it was conquered by Syria. The Syrians persecuted them which provoked them to a series of revolts led by Mattathias and his able son Judas Maccabæus, till they were able to regain their independence in 140 B.C. and Maccabæus was appointed their King. But their independence was only short-lived and internecine quarrels led to the intervention of Rome, till it was annexed by Pompey to the Roman Empire. (63 B.C.).

During their long period of captivity and exile, the Jews continued to flourish by trade and developed qualities which have made their influence world-wide. The exiled Jews were deeply conservative in their religion and continued to maintain a close connection with their brethren who had escaped their fate. In their religious outlook they had little to teach but a great deal to learn. They still worshipped their own God.

The prophets Elijah and Elisha took up cudgels against the worship of Yahweh in friendly alliance with Baal who had been the god of the Canaanites and of Egypt. In this prophetic movement the exclusion of all gods gave to Yahweh the credit for victory of the Israelities over their neighbours. They entered into a covenant with him for mutual help and support. The prophets or the priests of Israel now became

the sole interpreters of Yahweh's wishes. The prophets began to guide the national impulse. In pre-prophetic Israel polygamy was the theory and bigamy the usual practice. Brides were purchased and widows were sold as property <sup>(1)</sup>; a female slave could be used as a concubine <sup>(2)</sup>, and daughters sold <sup>(3)</sup> and could not inherit to their father. The prophets strove to remove this inequality of the sexes by permitting widows to re-marry <sup>(4)</sup> and daughters to inherit. <sup>(5)</sup> But while the prophets liberalized their social institutions, they gave to their religion a rigidity and a colour which made their religion the religion of a book. The priests of all countries lay a dominant emphasis on written scriptures, and the priestly Code of the Jews professed to promulgate a law to cover every step in life and every action in religion. It placed the unfortunate Jews under the iron grip not only of their religion but also of their religious priests. The Rabbi and the Scribes became their eyes and ears in all matters, whether political, social and religious; for religion had by now acquired a new meaning and embraced all functions of the mind.

At the same time their domination by the Persians, Egyptians and the Greeks and their wide wanderings in pursuit of trade had given them opportunities to absorb new ideas which became easily fused with the skeleton scheme of their domestic system. The dispersed Jews desiring to give their community a cohesiveness established meeting places called synagogues to which were attached schools for children in charge of honorary teachers called "Scribes." Meetings for prayer, praise and scripture-reading were held in them. These institutions were extended to Palestine and they soon eclipsed and later superseded the temple at Jerusalem and offered worship without sacrifice. The Israelites knew of the demons; but they had no place for angels in their religion. These were soon added, and archangels and angels brought under an ordered system of their religion to which was added a comprehensive system of demonology in which the serpent was more closely identified as

(1) *1 Kings* II—21.

(2) *Exodus* XXI—8.

(3) *Exodus* XXX—7.

(4) *Ruth* I—9.

(5) *Num.* III—6.

Satan ; <sup>(1)</sup> while their political despondency and centuries of servitude created in their mind the longing for a Saviour, <sup>(2)</sup> which began to be voiced by their scriptures as the only hope of a fallen people. They thought their despondency would surely not be unredressed. They hoped for an after-life ; <sup>(3)</sup> and the conception of God was widened into a universal spirit pervading the universe not excluding Hell. <sup>(4)</sup> A hope was expressed that the dead may rise again to live again better lives.

This hope became a settled conviction and the hope gave rise to an expectation, and the expectation to an assured faith, transferred from the popular literature to the popular dogma. <sup>(5)</sup> "From Judaism it passed into Christianity, where it was seen as guaranteed by the resurrection of Christ ; the resurrection being not of those who have striven and failed, but of the believers and non-believers alike." <sup>(6)</sup> It will thus be seen how certainly, though imperceptibly, Judaism became transformed into a virtually new religion under the impact of foreign conquerors and of the religious ideas they imparted or which the Jews in their peregrinations picked up and passed on to their people. The abandonment of sacrifices, and of the temples where they were offered ; the establishment of synagogues with their attached seminaries, the idea of re-birth, the hierarchy of archangels and angels were all foreign ideas which are similar to, if not identical with those of Buddhism. The central movement of the vital religion in Judaism passed on to Christianity, which added to it the doctrine of the Trinity which was absent from Judaism. That was essentially an Indian doctrine and the love of man, and the service of man had never been a part of the Judaism. It is an essentially Buddhist doctrine— and a doctrine which seriously antagonised Hinduism. There is then the order of monasticism, <sup>(7)</sup> and poverty, and the abolition of praying in public, <sup>(8)</sup> and the observance of the rules of morality which closely follow the teachings of Buddh.

(1) *Tobit* III--17 ; V--4, XII--15.

(2) *Job* XIX--25-27.

(3) *Psalms* XII--5-8 ; XVI--9-11 ;  
XXX--3.

(4) *Psalms* OXXXIX--8-18. .

(5) *Daniel* XII--2.

(6) *Luke* XX--34-37.

(7) *Matth.* VI--25-34.

(8) *Matth.* VI--5, 6.

The parallelisms between the legendary life of Gautam and that of Christ have been pointed out to be too close to be casual, and appear on the other hand, to be remarkably striking and so are the analogies between the Buddhist scriptures and the Christian gospels. The former may be categorised as follows:—

- (1) Miraculous conception.
- (2) Virgin Mother.
- (3) Miraculous birth.
- (4) Simeon in the temple.<sup>(1)</sup> "This is generally admitted to be the most important of the parallelisms and is accepted by Vanden Bergh, Pischal, and others".<sup>(2)</sup>
- (5) The visit to Jerusalem.<sup>(3)</sup> "Vanden Bergh admits that there was no feast, and that the gods who came to visit Gautam <sup>(4)</sup> can scarcely be compared with the Jewish doctors, but considers it important enough to presuppose the possibility of Indian influence".<sup>(5)</sup>
- (6) *Baptism*.—When the infant Gautam was being taken to the temple, he pointed out that it was unnecessary as he was superior to the gods, yet he went conforming to the custom of the world.<sup>(6)</sup> The parallel is to be found in the following passage of the Gospel according to the Hebrews where it is said: "Behold the mother of the Lord and his brethren said to him: John the Baptist baptizeth for the remission of sins, let us go and be baptized by him. But he said to them, in what have I sinned that I should go and be baptized by him, save perchance it is this very thing which I said, that it is ignorance."<sup>(7)</sup>

(1) *Luke II-25 ff.*

(2) *Thomas : Life of Buddha* 238.

(3) *Luke II 41 ff.*

(4) *Lalit Visvar.*

(5) *Thomas, Life of Buddha* 239.

(6) *Lalit Visvar.*

(7) Quoted by Jerome Adv. Pelag III—2; *Modern version in Math III—13.*

“Van Den Bergh holds that this is the original form of the Gospel account.” It is clear, that if it were, the parallel would be closer.”<sup>(1)</sup>

- (7) *The Temptation*.—<sup>(2)</sup> Mar similarly tempted Buddh.

On this parallelism Dr. Thomas adds. “It is still possible to maintain that some form of Buddhist legend was known to the Evangelists.”<sup>(3)</sup>

- (8) *Praise by Kisa Gotami*.—<sup>(4)</sup> This parallelism refers to the fact that when Rahul was born and the news given to Gautam by the woman Kisa Gotami who exclaimed:  
Happy indeed is the mother  
Happy indeed is the father  
Happy indeed is the wife who has such a husband.

Gautam exclaimed “Rahula is born, a bond is born.”  
The parallelism is admitted.<sup>(5)</sup>

- (9) *The widow's mite*.—<sup>(6)</sup> The reference is to the following passage in the *Sut'alankar*.  
“A poor maiden, who had heard the monks preaching recollected that sometime before, she had found in a dung-heap two mites (copper mites), so taking these forthwith she offered them as a gift to the priesthood in charity. Thereupon the President (Buddh) disregarding the rich gifts of others and beholding the deep principle of faith praised her pious charity. Soon afterwards the King's gaze fell upon her and she was made his chief Queen. But this parallelism does not go against the Evangelists as the *Sut'alankar* was composed later than the Gospels.

(1) Thomas: *Life of Buddh* 230.

(2) *Buddh Charita*, Bk. XIII; 49 S.B.E. 137. *Matth.* IV—2-12. *Padhan Sutta*. 10 S.B.E. 68, 69.

(3) Thomas, *Life of Buddh* 240.

(4) *Luke* XI—27

(5) See Ch. IV pp. 93, 94.

(6) *Luke* XXI—1-4, *Mark* XII—41-44.

- (10) *Peter walking on the sea*.—<sup>(1)</sup> A lay disciple crossed a river by walking across its swollen surface. Dr. Thomas says. "The story cannot be proved to be pre-Christian but the idea certainly is, as the power of going over water as if on dry land is one of the magic powers attained by concentration."
- (11) *The Samaritan woman*.—<sup>(2)</sup> The story of Anan having drunk water from the hands of a Matanga woman given in the preceding text<sup>(3)</sup> is held to be clearly imparted into the Gospels; the more so as the ban of the Jews on Samaritans belongs to a later age and is, therefore, an anachronism in the Gospels whereas it is natural in a Buddhist setting.<sup>(4)</sup>
- (12) *The end of the world*.—<sup>(5)</sup> Both describe the end of the world. In the Jaatak the gods descend and addressing the people as friends announce the coming of a new cycle at the end of a lac of years when a conflagration will destroy the world. They ask the people to practise friendliness, compassion, sympathy and equanimity.
- (13) *Choosing the disciples*.—<sup>(6)</sup> Buddha had his five disciples under the Pipal tree. The pipal is a variety of fig. Jesus turned to his disciple Nathaniel and said "When thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee." There is undoubtedly the fig tree in both but in the one case the Teacher was under the fig tree, but in the other the pupil was there. Seydel says that the scriptural text refers to the Teacher and not the pupil. "If so," Dr. Thomas observes, "With this alteration of the text we thus get not only a parallel, but an equally good piece of Bible exegesis."<sup>(7)</sup>

(1) *Math.* XIV—28.

(2) *John* IV—9.

(3) See Ch. XI ante p. 269.

(4) Thomas: *Life of Buddha* 242.

(5) 2 *Per* III—10-12 and Introduction to the *Jaatak*.

(6) *John* I-48.

(7) *Life of Buddha* 244.

(14) *The Prodigal Son*.—<sup>(1)</sup> The Buddhist Parable has been given elsewhere.<sup>(2)</sup> It occurs in the work—Lotus Ch. IV. the age of which is computed to be the second century A.D. Van den Bergh thinks that both the parables are probably based on an earlier story. This is, however, a mere possibility ; and as the computation of the age of the Buddhist Sutra is equally conjectural, the verdict one should be inclined to return is the Scotch “ Not proven.”

(15) *The man who was born blind*.—<sup>(3)</sup> As Jesus passed by he saw a man born blind and his disciples asked him : “ Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents that he was born blind ? ” Jesus answered that it was not due to either causes, but “ that the works of God should be made manifest in him,” or in one word, fate.

In Lotus Ch. 5 a man similarly born was stated to be paying the penalty for his past deeds. He was cured by a physician and then he saw his former foolishness. The parallelism lies in the question which imputes to the disciples the settled faith in the doctrine of Karm. Dr. Thomas thinks that it was equally known to the Pythagorians and was well-known to the Greeks. “ How the Jews actually acquired it may be questioned, but it was scarcely from an Indian work of the second century.”<sup>(4)</sup> But the Indian work did not promulgate it for the first time. The doctrine is as old as the Hindu philosophy and was well known in the pre-Buddhistic days. And as for the Pythagorean ethics, Pythagoras himself was born about 540 or 50 B.C. long after Gautam ; and his brotherhood had much in common with Buddhism ; what has been transmitted to us in

(1) Luke XV—11-32.

(2) Ch. XVI pp. 406, 407 *ante*.

(3) John IX—2.

(4) Thomas: *Life of Buddh*—245.



that respect is characteristic rather of the life and discipline of their peculiar society than their philosophy ; whereas the doctrine had been well developed in India centuries before his age. It seems likely that the Pythagorians had themselves borrowed their ethics from either Hinduism or Buddhism.

(16) *The Transfiguration.*—<sup>(1)</sup> Jesus brought his four disciples to the mountain “and was transfigured before them : and his face did shine as the Sun, and his raiment was white as the light.” Similar transfiguration took place twice to Buddha, once when he had attained to Buddh-hood and another when he was passing away.<sup>(2)</sup> On this occasion as soon as the Blessed One had donned the robes of cloth of gold, burnished and ready for wear, it appeared to have lost its splendour.<sup>(3)</sup>

(17) *The miracle of the loaves and fishes.*—<sup>(4)</sup> A company of five thousand people had appeared and they had to be fed. Phillip complained to Jesus that he had only two hundred pennyworth of bread, and a lad had five barley loaves and two small fishes. Jesus blessed them, fed the whole company and the fragments left over filled twelve baskets.

In the Introduction to Jaatak No. 78—‘The wife of a gild-master had placed a cake in the bowl of the Tathagat. He and his five hundred disciples fed on it as also did the gild-master and his wife but the cake never came to an end. They informed the Lord who ordered it to be thrown down the gate of the Jitvan which was down a slope near the gate. “And to this day, that place at the end of the slope is known as the Kapallapuv (Pan-cake).”

(1) *Matth.* XVII—2.

(2) *Parinirvan* IV—50 ; 11 S. B. E. 81.

(3) *Ib.* IV—47 ; 11 S. B. E. 80, 81.

(4) *John*, VI—3-12.

Not only in the Revised Version but more so in the Apocrypha, passages such as these abound. "The canonical gospels show great caution in drawing on this fund of tradition, but a number of Buddhist legends make their appearance in the Apocryphal gospels and are so obviously Indian in character that it can hardly be maintained that they were invented in Palestine or Egypt and spread thence eastwards. Trees bend down before the young Christ, and dragons (*nags*) adore him: when he goes to school to learn the alphabet, he convicts his teacher of ignorance and the goodman faints. <sup>(1)</sup> When he enters a temple in Egypt the images prostrate themselves before him just as they do before the young Gautam in the temple of Kapilvastu. <sup>(2)</sup> Mary is luminous before the birth of Christ which takes place without pain or impurity. <sup>(3)</sup> But the parallel is most curious, because the incident related is unusual in both Indian and European literature, in the detailed narrative in the gospel of James, and also in the *Lalit Vistar* relating how all activity of mankind and nature was suddenly interrupted at the moment of the nativity. <sup>(4)</sup> Wind, stars and rivers stayed their motion and labourers stood still in the attitude in which each was surprised. The same gospel of James also relates that Mary when six months old took seven steps, which must surely be an echo of the legend which attributes the same feat to the infant Buddha. <sup>(5)</sup>"

The following parallelisms in the discourses of the two great Teachers require no comment :

(18) *Treasure in heaven.*

**Buddh:**—Let the Bhikkhu subdue his passion for human and celestial pleasures, then having conquered existence, he would command the Dham. Such a one will wander rightly in the world.

A treasure that is laid up in a deep pit profits nothing and may easily be lost. The real treasure that

(1) *Gospel of Thomas* (long version) Ch. VI, XIV cf. *Lalit Vistar* Ch. X.

(2) *Pseudo-Matth.* Ch. XXII—XXIV; *Lalit Vistar* Ch. VIII.

(3) *Pseudo Matth.* Ch. XIII cf. *Dig.*

*Nik.* 14; *Maj. Nik.* 123. See Ch. ante.

(4) *Gospel. of James* XVIII and *Lalit Vistar* Ch. VII.

(5) Sir C. Elliot's—3, *Hinduism and Buddhism*—441, 442.

is laid up through charity and piety, temperance, self-control or deeds of merit is laid secure and cannot pass away. It is never gained by despoiling others, and no thief can steal it. A man, when he dies, must leave the fleeting wealth of the world, but this treasure of the virtuous acts he takes with him. Let the wise do good deeds; they are a treasure that can never be lost.<sup>(1)</sup>

*Jesus* :—Lay not up for yourself treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.<sup>(2)</sup>

(19) *Sermon on the Mount.*

(*Buddh*):—"Blessed is he who has understood the Dham. Blessed is he who does no harm to his fellow-beings. Blessed is he who overcomes sin and is free from passion. To the highest bliss has he attained who has conquered all selfishness and vanity. <sup>(3)</sup>

" Blissful is freedom from malice. Blissful is absence of lust and the loss of pride that comes from the thought "Jain."<sup>(4)</sup>

" Be merciful to those who struggle; have compassion upon the sufferers; pity the creatures who are hopelessly entangled in the snares of sorrow."<sup>(5)</sup>

*Jesus*.—" Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth."<sup>(6)</sup>

(20) *Buddh* saw a prostrate Bhikkhu who had no one to look after. He upbraided the Bhikkhus and said, "If ye, O Bhikkhus, wait not one upon the other,

(1) *Niddhikant Sutta* R. Dav. p. 127.

(2) *Math.* VI—19-21.

(3) Benares Sermon (Gya Tehee Roll

Pa) quoted in Carus: *Gospel of Buddhism* 34.

(4) *M.V.* 1—3-4.

(5) Carus: *Gospel of Buddhism* 36.

(6) *Math.* V—3, 6.

who is there, indeed who will wait upon you ? Whosoever, O Bhikkhus, would wait upon me, he should wait upon the sick.”<sup>(1)</sup>

*Jesus* :—(Referring to the resurrection).

“ And the King shall answer and say unto them, verily I say unto you inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

“ Then shall he answer them saying, verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.”<sup>(2)</sup>

Seydel gives fifty such instances, but Vanden Bergh reduces them to nine ; other writers admit these close parallelisms which the others reject altogether.

An able writer and a devout Christian is free to admit that the teachings of Christ, both in their letter and their spirit, owe their inception to India. After referring to some of the parallelisms already noted, he writes : “ That Christ had come under the influence of the spiritual ideas of the Far East is a hypothesis which explains many things, and for which, therefore, there are many things to be said.....Even the words which Christ is reported to have used about his own kinship to and oneness with ‘ the Father ’—words on which all the fantastic structures of Christian theology have been based—are but the expressions, in a new notation, of the sublime Indian doctrine that ‘ He is the true self of every creature ’,—that ‘ Brahm and the self are one ’.....The ideas which dominate Christ’s teaching, and which, according to my hypothesis, had come to him from the Far East were not wholly new to the Græco-Roman world of his day. First Pythagoras and then Plato had expounded them, from his own point of view and in his own language, to an esoteric circle of disciples. But no popular exposition of them had been attempted in the West till Christ came under their

(1) *M.F.* VIII—26 ; 17 *S.B.E.* 241.

(2) *Math.* XXV—40, 45

influence and was captivated by their truth and beauty. Whether they were consciously or unconsciously adopted by Christ, matters little. The broad fact confronts us, that the ideas, which he expounded, coincide, at every vital point, with ideas which were current in India many centuries before the Christian era. Had India, through all these centuries, been entirely walled off from Western Asia and Southern Europe, the coincidences between the teaching of Christ and the teaching of Buddha and his forerunners might conceivably be regarded as purely fortuitous. But never before the establishment of British rule in India, had the opportunities for intercourse between East and West been so numerous or so favourable as in the centuries which preceded the birth of Christ..... What Buddha had done to the ideas of the Upanishads, Christ did to the same ideas when they had come to him, as they probably did, through the medium of Buddha's ethical teaching,—he made them available for the daily needs of ordinary men. But the method by which Christ worked was entirely his own. To graft the spiritual idealism of India on the stem of Hebrew poetry, and so to bring it home to the *heart*, rather than to the *mind* or the *conscience*, was the work of his life.”<sup>(1)</sup>

That the Buddhism of Buddha was not long the Buddhism of the people is as true as that the Christianity of Christ was not long the Christianity of the people. After the death of both, schism tore up their Church into rival camps and as Buddhism became subdivided into two main sects, so did Christianity, and for a similar reason. Neither Buddha nor Jesus had appointed a successor to take their place. Their religion was a religious republic in which, after the founder all disciples were equal, and so were treated by the Master. Of course, those attached to their persons were naturally accorded a higher position, but it was only a courtesy and not a right. When Buddha died the fundamental instinct of man suddenly rose above the attachment and religious devotion of the disciples, and their susceptibilities had to be accommodated to the precepts of the religion. Consequently in

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(1) *The Creed of Buddha* by the Author of *the Creed of Christ*. 278—281.





(13) *Kybera and Hariti, stone—Sahri Bahlol.*





Other sects, *e.g.*, the Corinthians, Monarchians and the Manicheans to which sect Augustine himself at one time belonged, maintained the same view. The Manichean sect was founded by Manu, a Persian who combined the Zoaroastrian dualism with Christian doctrine. It has already been seen that Zoaroastrianism was only an off-shoot of Vedāntism. These beliefs were declared as heresies only by the council of Nicæa (325 A.D.) who declared in favour of the Nicæne creed. But the sects though out-numbered have never been silenced, and the Nestorian Christians still survive and have established a church of their own. They hold that Christ was only a man but became afterwards divine. As regards the text of his teaching the original authentic version contained in the collection of fourteen books bears a still closer resemblance between the two religions, so much so that the life of the younger Teacher seems like the life of Buddha edited in Judea. As is well-known, this version was considerably rationalized in the Revised Version of the English Church, but the Apocrypha is still regarded as authoritative to this extent that "the Church doth read for example of life and instruction of manners; but yet it doth not apply them to establish any doctrine."<sup>(1)</sup>

The present day Christianity is thus no longer the Christianity as it was understood by the Christian fathers. As Herbert Spencer remarked: "Then again, there is the truth, which is becoming more and more manifest, that real creeds continually diverge from normal creeds and adapt themselves to new social and individual requirements. The contrast between mediæval Christianity and the present Christianity of Protestant countries, or again the contrast between the belief in a devil to torment the wicked, strenuously held early in their country, and the spreading denial or again the recent expression of opinion by a Roman Catholic that there

(1) Art. VI. The word "Apocrypha" means "Hidden secret" i.e., "Esoteric." But much later it came to mean "of doubtful authority or authenticity" and the books would more correctly be described as "Deuterocanonical" or "Ecclesiastical": The authorised version of the Bible was settled only in 1611 A.D.; and it was revised in 1881-1885.

may be happiness in hell, suffice to show the re-moulding of what is practically a quite different creed. And when we observe, too, how in modern preaching theological dogmas are dropping into the background and ethical doctrines coming into the foreground, it seems that in course of time we shall reach a stage in which, recognizing the mystery of things as insoluble, religious organizations will be devoted to ethical culture.<sup>(1)</sup>"

Christianity even as it is now understood, how does it compare with Buddhism? It is quite another story and must be the subject of another chapter.

The fact is that critics have a great difficulty in acting as judges in these cases. A fair judge would have to be wholly free from religious bias which cannot be said of every writer. In considering this question, we have not only to eliminate sentiment, but give our verdict upon the cumulative facts and circumstances, as much upon the analogies of the lives as of the teaching and of the ritual, the canonization of Buddh as a Christian saint to whom a church was dedicated as far west as Palermo, and the obvious fact that India was in close touch with Palestine and Greece and the knowledge of Indian philosophy and its religions had penetrated as far as Rome. Jerusalem is after all only 2,000 miles from Peshawar; Buddhistic learning was at its height in the third and the fourth century B.C. and if Buddhism could invade the mountainous passes of the Himalayan countries as far as China which is at least equi-distant, it is not surprising that the well-beaten caravan routes of the west exported Indian learning along with the cargo of ivory, sandal-wood and spices which Solomon acknowledgedly received as the produce of India. Of course, as is well known, caravans in those days were moving camps with their full equipment of priests, barbers and beggars—priests being necessary not only for the performance of daily rites, but also for the performance of ceremonies attending

(1) 2 *Autobiography* 468; Such is the view of the distinguished authors of "Essays and Reviews" (1860) written by six clergymen including Dr. Temple afterwards the Archbishop of Canterbury

and Prof. Jowett which led to the establishment of the Broad Church which rejects miracles and adopts "the precepts rather than the theology of religion."

births, marriages and deaths. The caravan route usually took four to six months to traverse by slow stages, but there was a quicker sea-route. Buddhist missionaries had effected their conquest in the north, east and south as far as the sea and beyond; they had converted Afghanistan and Central Asia; they had gone on at least two missions to Rome. They could not have left out the intervening region which offered such promising field for their missionary enterprise. The possibility and even the probability of this contact is now no longer denied; but what is doubted is its certainty which only a close study of the earlier canons can dispel.

The influence of Buddhism upon the Arabian Prophet can only be traced through the medium of Christianity, though Mr. Havell ascribes the rise of Islam to the spiritual impetus imparted by Buddhism. "It was," he says, "borne along the highways of commerce by sea and land to the furthest confines of Asia both in the east and west. And though the echoes of the debating halls of India may not have resounded upon the coasts of Arabia so clearly as they did among the hills of the further east, the doctrine of the unity of Godhead implicit in the theory of the One in Many was probably as familiar to the camel-drivers of Arabian caravans as it was to the students of China, long before the Prophet raised the banner of Islam.

"Mohammad was an inspired teacher who skilfully adapted his theological formulas to Arabian tribal traditions, in the same way as Buddha had established the Law upon the traditions of the Indo-Aryan village community. If he was not as familiar with Indian religious thought as he was with the teaching of Christianity, he certainly caught the spirit of *Bhakti* which was common to them both. The conflict between Islam and Hinduism was chiefly on matters of ritual, like the dispute of the Christian Church. On higher spiritual grounds the Brahman pandit and the Mulla found a *modus vivendi*, for India was a motherland to them both."(<sup>1</sup>)

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(<sup>1</sup>) Havell (E. B.); *The History of Aryan Rule in India* 209—210.

Apart, however, from the influence of Buddhism upon the Islamic religion and art, pre-Islamic cults still survive in the Islamic countries. which owe their inception or pristine vigour to their association with Buddhism. Such is the cult of the Sufis which has added the spiritual or mystic side to Islam. But the Sufis existed long before the advent of the Arabian Prophet. They had, in fact, a dominating influence in Arabia, the people of which either followed the Greek or the Indian lead and had accordingly ranged themselves as *Maschaiousns* (or the walkers) or the *Ischrachaiouns* (the contemplators). When Mahomed appeared, these became the *Muteklim* (metaphysicians) and the Sufis (mystics). The latter put an esoteric interpretation on both the Kuran and the Hadiyat or collected sayings of the Prophet; they dispense with the Jemaat and other formalities of the mosque; they, in many cases, recognize the fact of spiritual religion outside Islam, and in general they observe the rules of poverty, abstinence from wine, and celibacy. The religious order of Derveshes closely followed the practices of the Hindu and Buddhist monks; they live in convents (called *Takkias* or *Khankas*) endowed with lands or Waqf just as the Buddhist *muths* were, and Hindu *muths* are, endowed with inam lands incapable of alienation.

The head of the convent is a Sheikh or Murshad who represents the *Pir* or the original founder of the Order. They canonize their members who have become conspicuous for their piety or spiritual excellence. The Derveshes extend to all Islamic countries, Egypt, Turkey, Persia, India and Central Asia. They practise *Yoge* with a view to produce an ecstatic state in which the soul emancipated from its earthly envelope rises to the spiritual height when it is able to unite and hold communion with God. It gives them supernatural power to cure diseases, charm snakes and work miracles. As a religious sect the Derveshes stand apart from the rest of the Musalmans, holding as they do that "the paths leading to God are as many as the breaths of His creatures."

The Dervishes are divided into thirty-six well-defined orders of which, however, only a few survive. They claim to a pre-historic ancestry and one of their order the *Qutbe* ascribe the foundation to the prophet Elijah. In their poetic flights the Persian poets like Sadi and Hafiz have popularized Sufism which has assumed an intellectual movement in the new regime.

But the Dervishes as a class have latterly fallen from their high state, as have their Indian confreres, the Bairagis, Sanyasis and Gossains, the Jogis, Jatis and Odassis, the Bhikshuks and Vanprusths, the Jungums of North India and the Bonzes or Buddhist Bhikkhus. The "Dervish" like the Bhikkhu means a beggar, the word "Dervish" in Persian meaning "the sill of the door" or those who beg from door to door which they now do and with the decadence of the high idealism of which they were the first fruit, the Dervishes are no more than wandering mendicants who live by professional jugglery, magic and chicanery, as do the other religious beggars and vagabonds, who though masquerading as religious friars, Sadhus or Murshads, only prey upon the credulity and guilelessness of the multitude.<sup>(1)</sup>

The inspiration of the Buddhist theology did not become exhausted with the decline of Buddhism in India. It is well-known that Akbar drew his inspiration from that perennial fountain of religious thought. The short-lived religion of *Din e Ilahi* which he founded, was on the basis of the chapters, Sanghs and the rituals prescribed by Gautam Muni. About the same time another reformer Chaitanya drew his reforming zeal from the Buddhist Gaya Temple, built on the site hallowed by the name of the founder of that religion. Other reformers have similarly drawn upon Buddhism for their tenets and rituals.

(1) See for their history Brown (John P.): *The Dervishes or Oriental Spiritualism* (New Ed. H. A. Rose, O. U. P. 1927).

## CHAPTER XVIII

### BUDDHISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

Buddhism has been subjected to the cross-fire of both Christianity and Hinduism, though it is the parent of one and the child of the other. The combined attack of these two competing creeds has greatly prejudiced the right understanding of its essential doctrine. The two religions have been contrasted and it has been roundly asserted that while Christianity recognizes the existence of a personal God who reveals himself through man to man and through whom alone he extends his Divine Grace of mercy and pardon for his original sin, Buddhism is a *cul de sac*, in that it acknowledges no God, professes no revelation, admits no original sin, appeals to no Grace, admits no intermediary and it lands man into a nothingness. The Hindus attack Buddhism because it denies the supremacy of the Brahmans as the divine-ordained expounders of the creed, denies caste which is the fulcrum of Hinduism, opposes self-mortification as a means to salvation, ridicules its gods and goddesses, decries idol-worship and is in fact a thorough-going, iconoclastic attack upon its most approved and cherished tenets, notions and philosophy.

A general conspectus of Buddhism *vis à vis* the other religions including Christianity has already been given in the last chapter.<sup>(1)</sup>

In this chapter it is proposed to examine the relationship of Buddhism to Christianity in particular—both as understood by its original founders.

But before embarking on a comparison of Buddhism with Christianity, we must be sure that we use the term Christianity in the same sense. For while the Hinyan sect of Buddhism still represents the Orthodox Church, the

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(1) Pp. 426—447 *ante*.

same cannot be predicated of Christianity which is now split up into innumerable sects, as widely differing from one another in their essential tenets as the apostolic Christianity differs from Protestantism and Protestantism from the Non-conformist churches, to which many distinguished and able men now belong.

Professor Monier Williams, whose work on Buddhism was the outcome of a series of lectures delivered under the auspices of a Missionary foundation, had naturally to compare or contrast the subject of his lectures with the conviction of his audience. In this respect he may be said to be a whole-hogger, since he sees nothing good in Buddhism, his standard, of course, being Christianity. Other Christian devouts are not likely to agree with him, in that in trying to draw a contrast between the two religions, the learned Professor has taken for granted that the one religion must be false because the other religion is unquestionably true, and it would be blasphemy to think it otherwise.

Now, the first question that the Professor asks and rightly asks is: What do you mean by the term "Religion?" "Clearly the definition of the word religion," he says, "is beset with difficulties, and its etymology is too uncertain to help us in explaining it. We shall, however, be justified if we affirm that every system, claiming to be a religion in the proper sense of the word, must postulate the eternal existence of one living and true God of infinite power, wisdom, and love, the Creator, Designer, and Preserver of all things visible and invisible. It must also take for granted the immortality of man's soul or spirit and the reality of a future state and of an unseen world. It must also postulate in man an innate sense of dependence on a personal God—a sense of reverence and love for Him, springing from a belief in His justice, holiness, wisdom, power, and love, and intensified by a deep consciousness of weakness, and a yearning to be delivered from the presence, tyranny and penalty of sin." (1)

(1) *Buddhism*, 538.

In other words, in the sense in which the Professor uses that term, the word "religion" implies (i) Belief in a personal God ; (ii) Man's dependence upon Him ; (iii) Belief in man's Original Sin ; (iv) Belief in man's soul and (v) its immortality.

If these were the only pre-requisites one would still hesitate to subscribe to the definition, but the Professor adds four additional pre-requisites which makes religion a synonym for Christianity. He says : "Then starting from these assumptions it must satisfy four requisites.

*First*, it must reveal the Creator in His Nature and attributes to His creature, man.

*Secondly*, it must reveal man to himself. It must impart to him a knowledge of his own nature and history—what he is ; why he was created ; whither he is tending ; and whether he is at present in a state of decadence downwards from a higher condition, or of a development upwards from a lower.

*Thirdly*, it must reveal some method by which the finite creature may communicate with the infinite Creator—some plan by which he may gain access to Him and become united with Him, and be saved by Him from the consequences of his own sinful acts.

*Fourthly*, such a system must prove its title to be called a religion by its regenerating effect on man's nature, by its influence on his thoughts, desires, passions, and feelings : by its power of subduing all his evil tendencies, by its ability to transform his character and assimilate him to the God it reveals."<sup>(1)</sup>

It is submitted that these requisites are the pre-requisites of dogmatic Christianity, but they are not the pre-requisites of a religion ; which is primarily concerned with man's duty to God and secondarily with man's duty to man since it establishes an indirect *nexus* with God. Strictly speaking, the first alone is the function of religion and the second only of morality ; but since the two duties are inter-related, they have become

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(1) *Buddhism* p. 538.



allied and are inseparably associated with the concept. It is true, religion is an elastic term and admits of various interpretations, but its basic connotation is belief in a Supreme Being or Beings especially a personal God controlling the universe and entitled to worship and obedience.

This exhausts its primary sense. But as before remarked, the effect of such belief upon human conduct and the practices resulting from such belief fall equally within its outer ambit.

It has already been seen in the previous chapter how far Buddhism answers to this test of religion.<sup>(1)</sup> For the present, let us assume that Professor Williams' description of religion is its only meaning. Now, if we analyse his four pre-requisites, what do we find? The first three postulate the Revelation of God by Himself to man, while the fourth refers to social morality, though both the third and the fourth clauses use somewhat loose expressions of which only a general drift is at all clear; since the third condition combines two somewhat independent ideas while no account is taken of the fact that that condition as a whole may not be compatible with the last. Assuming, however, that such is the view of the protagonists of that school of thought, how does Buddhism compare with Christianity? We are not here concerned with the question whether it is or it is not a religion. According to Professor Williams, the one decisive feature which distinguishes Buddhism from Christianity is the personality of Christ. Buddh said to his followers: "Take nothing from me, trust to yourselves alone." Christ said, "Take all from me; trust not to yourself."<sup>(2)</sup> In other words, while Buddh's religion preached self-help, Christ's religion promised the helping hand of Christ as the Mediator and Redeemer of men's sins which cannot be purged without His divine help. He adds: "And perhaps the most important (point) is, that Christ constantly insisted on the fact that He was God-sent, whereas Buddh always described himself as self-sent."<sup>(3)</sup> But is not this a contrast between Faith and Reason? Christ asks you to believe that he was deputed by

(1) Pp. 417-419 *ibid.*

(2) *Buddhism* p. 550.

(3) *Id.* p. 553.

God to reveal Him to man, whereas Buddha never made any such claim. But what evidence have we beyond the reported claim of Christ to the Messiahship? Suppose Buddha had made a similar claim, would he have then become a greater teacher than Christ? And have not the founders of other religions made a similar claim, and is not the evidence in their case the same, *viz.*, their own assertion.

Surely, if this is all the difference between Buddhism and Christianity, the difference is all to the credit of Buddhism. For, while Jesus, who called himself the son of Man, became later exalted as the son of God; Buddha never yielded to that temptation and had again and again to correct the asseverations of the devout that he was inspired. So when Upak, the naked Hindu ascetic, met him on his way to Benares, he said: "Your countenance, friend, is serene; your complexion is pure and bright. In whose name, friend, have you retired from the world? Who is your teacher? Whose doctrine do you profess?"—Buddha replied: "I follow no teacher. I have overcome all foes and all stains; I am superior to all men and to all gods: I am the absolute Buddha. And I am going now to Benares to set in motion the Wheel of the Law, as a King, the triumphant Wheel of his Kingdom. I am the conqueror."<sup>(1)</sup> This was in the early stage of his career; now witness his last words: "Hearken, O Disciples, I charge ye: everything that cometh into being, passeth away; strive without ceasing."<sup>(2)</sup>

The touchstone of Buddha's teaching was reason. His goal was truth. He wanted no one to believe him because it was his word. He was anxious that every one should exercise his reason and reach his conviction by the door of enlightenment. It is thus that he desired his disciples to reach the highest attitude of truth, the summit of human perfection; and this he emphasized with his dying breath: "Then spake the Exalted One to the Venerable Anand: 'Although this is not the time for flowers, Anand, yet are these two twin

(1) *Mahavagga* I—6, 7, S. B. E. XIII.

(2) See Ch. VII *ante* p. 163.

trees completely decked with blossoms, and flowers are falling, showering, streaming down on the body of the Perfect One..... heavenly melodies are sounding in the air, in honour of the Perfect One. But to the Perfect One belongeth another homage, other reverence. Whosoever, Anand, male disciple or female follower, lay-brother, or lay-sister, lives in the truth, in matters both great and small, and lives according to the ordinance and also walks in the truth in details, these bring to the Perfect One the highest honour, glory, praise, and credit. Therefore, Anand, must ye practise thinking. Let us live in the truth, in matters great and small, and let us live according to the ordinance and walk in the truth also in details.'”(1)

It is no small credit to the Perfect One that he emphasized his disciples to discard the *ipse dixit* of an older faith in which even the smallest details of daily life—even the food to eat and the liquid to drink were stated to be Divine Commands. His dialectic method was essentially Socratic ; his objective was identical ; but the people whom he got inured to that method were wholly unaccustomed to exercise their reason. They had been born and brought up in a system which was professedly theocratic. To them the gods of the Vedas were real. To them they spake through the medium of Brahmans. To them the thoughts, wrapped in a sacred tongue, were as the voice of thunder and the glow of the lightning. To them Buddha seemed to dissemble, when he denied his godly status. To them the voice of a man appealing to their reason was as strange as a lesson in differential calculus.

It is perfectly true that unlike Christ, Buddha claimed no exclusive relationship with God. He did not say to his disciples : “ As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you ” (2) “ I am the way, the truth and the life ; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”(3) Nor did he say “ If you had known me, ye should have known my Father also ; and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.”(4) All this

(1) Oldenberg's *Buddh*—201. See Ch. VII *ante* p. 162.

(2) *St. John* XX—21.

(3) *Ib* XIV—6.

(4) *Ib*. V—7.

rests on faith. If you believe—(a) that the statements imputed to Jesus were really made by him, upon which we have no testimony beyond that of the unlettered and credulous apostles and—(b) that if he made the statements, they must be true because their truth cannot be questioned, then Buddhism and Christianity are two things apart and it is idle to compare or contrast them because the truth of both cannot be tested by throwing them into the same crucible. Professor Williams sets out other points for contrast. But they run on the same line. For instance, he refers to the Christian doctrine of Original Sin, which he says Buddhism denies. But what evidence have we of its existence ; and upon what rational basis can its denial be refuted ?

Professor Williams descends into the particulars of the birth of the founders of the two religions. He says that while Jesus was born of a virgin who was conceived of the Holy Ghost <sup>(1)</sup>, the legend as to Buddha's conception is by no means anything so miraculous. The fact is that it is not miraculous at all. The fable of the white elephant associated with his birth is, of course, one of those vulgar encrustations upon the pure faith which have become attached to the founders of all creeds. The story is a pious legend connecting Buddha with his previous incarnation. To the same effect are the stories of his miracles which Professor Williams says are inferior to those attributed to Christ.<sup>(2)</sup> But even so the Professor forgets the mentality of the two races and the compass of their imagery. He writes. "Then in regard to the miracles which both the Bible and the Tripitak describe as attestations of the truth of the teaching of each, contrast the simple and dignified statement that 'the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them' <sup>(3)</sup> with the following description of the Buddha's miracles in the *Maha Vagga* <sup>(4)</sup> 'At the command of the Blessed One, the five hundred pieces of fire-wood could not be split and were split,

(1) *St. Matthew*—I-20.

(2) *Buddhism*, p. 555.

(3) *St. Matthew* XI—5.

(4) I—20, 24 ; S. B. E. XIII—133.

the fires could not be lit up and were lit up, could not be extinguished and were extinguished.' Besides he created five hundred vessels with fire. Thus the number of these miracles amounts to three thousand and five hundred." As to this, all one can say, is that miracles being a manifestation of occult power, possession of the power is the only thing that matters ; to what end it was utilized depends upon the adventitious exigency of the moment. But in either case are we not taking too serious a view of the pious embellishments of the devout, —probably invented on purpose to popularize the creed by making a vivid appeal to the masses ?

Then it is said that Buddha never rose from the dead but Christ did, to which we add a query. What evidence is there of it except the tainted evidence of the superstitious fishermen ?

The apologists of Christianity must have, indeed, a very poor case if they regard these facts as the crucial issue in the two religions. Some other points are singled out which however call for no notice here. The Christian doctrine of resurrection is contrasted with the Buddhist doctrine of metempsychosis. But there is no scientific basis for either. And critics of Christianity point out that the single prophecy ascribed to Christ has been disproved by time. For had he not said " Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death till they see the son of Man coming in His Kingdom." (1) Christianity, it is said, promises eternal life, while Buddhism holds out the dismal prospect of eternal extinction. Even if this be so, does the superiority of Christianity depend upon its promises and not upon its truth ? And what evidence have we of the latter ? The resurrection which the Christian scripture speaks of is the resurrection of the body : " And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." (2) In other words, Christ had prophesied an immediate

(1) *Matth.* XXVI 28, 2 *Act.* XXIV—15 ; cf. *Rev.* XX—13 ; *John* V—29.

(2) 2 *Peter* 111-12, 13 ; 2 *Rev.* XXI—1 : XX—11.

resurrection on his second coming when the present heavens and earth, being not good enough for man to live in, will pass away, and give place to new heavens and a new earth and cast death and hell into the lake of fire. <sup>(1)</sup> This new universe will be ruled by Christ who will be personally inducted into his everlasting throne by God himself. "Who shall come and shall not keep silence when He will vindicate Himself by an open signal, decisive, and final judgment which will make manifest to all men that verily there is a God that judgeth the earth."<sup>(2)</sup> On this last day, the day of resurrection and the day of judgment, believers in Christ will be pardoned of their sins and received into the spiritual kingdom, while the unbelievers in Him will be consigned to perdition;" <sup>(3)</sup> "wherefore beloved seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless." <sup>(4)</sup>

Buddh never fed his disciples upon such large promises. He reminded them of the stern law of retribution. Be righteous and ye shall be saved. Be wicked and ye shall be damned. "All things are made of one essence, yet things are different according to the forms which they assume under different impressions. As they form themselves, so they act, and as they act, so they are. 'It is, Kashyap, as if a potter made different vessels out of the same clay. Some of these pots are to contain sugar, others rice, others curds and milk, others still are vessels of impurity. There is no impurity in the clay used; the diversity of the pots is only due to the moulding hands of the potter who shapes them for the various uses that circumstances may require. And as all things originate from one essence, so they are developing according to one law and they are destined to one aim—which is Nirvan. The great cloud full of rain comes up in this wide universe covering all countries and oceans to pour down its rain everywhere, over all grasses, shrubs, herbs, trees of various species, families of plants of different names growing on the earth, on the hills, on the mountains, or in the valleys.'

(1) *Rev.* XX—1.

(2) *Psalms* L.—1-3.

(3) *2 Peter* 111-7.

(4) *Ib.* 111-14.

"Then, Kashyap, the grasses, shrubs, herbs, and wild trees suck the water emitted from that great cloud which is all of one essence and has been abundantly poured down, and they will according to their nature, acquire a proportionate development, shooting up and producing blossoms and fruits in their season. Rooted in one and the same soil, all those families of plants and germs are quickened by water of the same essence.

"Verily, I say unto you : Not in the heavens, not in the midst of the sea, not if thou hidest thyself away in the clefts of the mountains, wilt thou find a place where thou canst escape the fruit of thy evil actions.

"At the same time thou art sure to receive the blessings of thy good actions."<sup>(1)</sup>

But the divergences between the two religions are as nothing compared to the similarities which form the core of Christianity. Not only in its tenets, but equally in its form, method and practices, its rituals and institutions has the younger religion borrowed bodily from the older one. This is now acknowledged ; but the unreserved acknowledgment is held by the devout to have shaken the foundation of Christianity with the result that undue emphasis is laid upon the divergences, it being pointed out that taken as a religion Buddhism is agnostic or even atheistic while the Christian religion is purely theistic and postulates the existence of and belief in a personal God.

Now as to the Christian God, what are the facts ?

The Christian conception is admittedly a sublimated and purified concept, arising out of the common basis of all religions which were animistic, associating the presence of Divine power with certain prominent natural objects and phenomena *e.g.*, hill-tops, <sup>(2)</sup> trees, <sup>(3)</sup> stones, <sup>(4)</sup> springs, <sup>(5)</sup> the fire, lightning <sup>(6)</sup> and the wind. <sup>(7)</sup> These forces and phenomena of nature were then

(1) Paul Carus : *Gospel of Buddha* 139, 142.

(2) 1 Samuel X-5, 6 ; 1 King III-2, 3.

(3) 1 Samuel IX-13 ; X-5 ; 1 Kings III-2, 3 Dent. XII-2.

(4) *Joshua* XXIV--26.

(5) *Genesis* XVI-14 ; XXI-30-33.

(6) *Rigveda* ; *Psalms* XVIII-13, 14, 15.

(7) *Ib.*

personified, and the natural conception of God was anthropomorphic: "And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day."<sup>(1)</sup> "He relished the smell of well cooked meat."

"And Noah built an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the Lord smelled a sweet savour....."<sup>(2)</sup> He became known as the Jehovah and chose Moses to secure his peoples' loyalty to him, made a covenant with him and stipulated that he will destroy the altars of Baal and all other rival gods for he was 'jealous' of their rivalry.<sup>(3)</sup> Moses took up the cudgels for his God and entered upon a long and obstinate struggle extending over the whole period of Israel's independence. All this was proceeding when Gautam Buddha was born. It is only in later ages that the conception of God was purified and a distinction began to be made between Jehovah and the ministers of his will—one of whom a son of King David, was exalted into his chosen Son, but his mission was to destroy unbelievers in the Jewish Jehovah: "Thou shalt wreak them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them into pieces like a potter's vessel"<sup>(4)</sup> All heretics whether relations, widows or orphans were to be killed without mercy.<sup>(5)</sup> A hope was given to the believers that God will appear and it was a living expectation in the first century B. C.<sup>(6)</sup> The idea of sonship of God was still undeveloped. It was sometimes applied to the nation<sup>(7)</sup> and at another to the Davidic King.<sup>(8)</sup>

These somewhat nebulous ideas were afloat when Jesus was born. He seized hold of them and declared himself the embodiment of the dual ideal. His idea of God was the Jewish idea with the vindictiveness left out. The Jews spoke of God as their Father to express the closeness of the relation between Him and Israel.<sup>(9)</sup> Christ had borrowed from

(1) *Genesis* III—8.

(2) *Genesis* VIII—20, 21,

(3) *Exodus* XXXIV—10-14.

(4) *Psalms* II—7-9 *Isiah* IX—1-7.

(5) *Isiah* IX—17.

(6) *Murray's Bible Dict.* p. 313.

(7) *Exodus* IV—22.

(8) *2 Samuels* VII—14.

(9) *Psalms* c III-13; *Isiah* LXIII—16.



the old Testament his title of "Son of Man" <sup>(1)</sup> The doctrine of Trinity grew out of Christ's claim to be an incarnation of God; for it gave God a dual existence, God manifest, and God invisible to which was added a third element in the Godhead, namely the spirit of God, the Holy Spirit or the Holy Ghost, which represented the direct influence of God upon the human soul which Christ utilized as a "comforter" to his disciples till his resurrection. <sup>(2)</sup>

It will thus be seen that so far as Christ is concerned, he added nothing to his revelation of God. His references to Him are casual and conventional. Thus: "God is a spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth". <sup>(3)</sup> Now if we turn to Buddhism, we find a similar dearth of informative references to God. His references to Him are critical, exposing as he does the ignorance of the Brahman to profess to know all about God. "Then you say, Vaseth <sup>(4)</sup>, that not one of the Brahmans, or of their teachers, or of their pupils, even upto the seventh generation, has ever seen Brahman (the God of the Brahmans) face to face. And that even the Rishis of old, the utterers of the ancient verses, which the Brahmans of to-day recite so carefully in tone precisely as they have been handed down—even they did not pretend to know or to have seen where or whence or whither Brahman is. So that the Brahmans versed in the three Vedas have forsooth said thus: To a state of union with that which we know not and have not seen we can show the way and can say: This is the straight path, this is the direct way, which leads him who acts according to it, into a state of union with Brahman.

"Now what think you, Vaseth? Does it not follow, this being so, then the talk of the Brahmans, versed though they be in the three Vedas, is foolish talk?

"Verily, Vaseth, that Brahmans versed in the three Vedas should be able to show the way to a state of union with that which they do not know, neither have seen—such a condition

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<sup>(1)</sup> *Daniels* VII—13, 15; *Psalms* <sup>(8)</sup> *John* IV—24.  
<sup>(2)</sup> *John* XIV—16, 26, <sup>(4)</sup> *Vasishth*.  
VIII—4.

of things has no existence. As when a string of blind men are clinging one to the other, neither can the foremost see, nor can the middle one see, nor can the hindmost see, just so is the talk of the Brahmans versed in the three Vedas."<sup>(1)</sup> Words strong, but how true; words which have a wider application to the Brahmans, for there has been no religion since in which the founder has not professed to come direct from God and to know all about Him and yet how little have they said about it !

That Buddh should have been made the target of criticism because of his reticence about God shows to what extent the human mind is a prey to its own delusions.

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(1) See *Tejja Sutta* S.B.E. 14, 15.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### BUDDHISM AND MODERN THOUGHT.

Buddh had prophesied for his religion only a longevity of five hundred years. A new Buddha was then to arise and proclaim a new gospel. Buddhism has outlived his prophecy and if we take its later modification and the assimilation of its tenets to Hinduism, the two religions combined extend their sway over half the population of the world. A religion of mere nescience and negation, of morbid pessimism and no hopefulness is not likely to have influenced so large a portion of humanity. Its pessimism may have appealed to the Indian mind with whose philosophy of despair early Buddhism was in accord. But that could not have been an attraction to the great Mongolian race, to the people of China and Japan who are by nature optimists, lively and inclined to make the most of the present and quite careless of the morrow. That such people should have clung to the gospel of despair cannot be explained away by the innate conservatism of the religious mind.

In the pre-Christian days when the Buddhist mission arose, crossed the mountains and braved the perils of the sea to propagate the Gospel, its influence in its overseas empire might perhaps be conceived as due to the enthusiasm and fervour of the missionary enterprise. But that fervour has long since died out. Buddhism is no longer a missionary religion, as are, for example, Christianity and Islam. Nor has it the same influential patrons as Christianity has and yet Buddhism has been holding its own in spite of the zeal and enterprise of the Christian Missionary. It has even begun to attract the Western mind where societies have been formed for its study, and its vast literature translated and studied with appreciation, in spite of the denunciations of the Church that it is rank atheism and gives no hope of eternal life. There can be no doubt that as compared to the attractions of Christianity and Islam, Buddhism offers nothing; while Christianity, offers

a resurrection and eternal life to all believers upon this very earth, the other takes you to the region of musk-houries whose saffron breath will never leave the faithful.

With all its adaptations and revisions, Buddhism is still a religion of earnest endeavour, selfless sacrifice and uncertain reward. But nevertheless its votaries, if not on the increase, are certainly not on the decline.

Even so sober a thinker as Huxley was struck by its vitality inspite of its drawbacks which the Romanes Lecturer thus described: "A system" he says, "which knows no God in the Western sense, which denies a soul to man, which counts the belief in immortality a blunder and the hope of it a sin, which refuses any efficacy to prayer and sacrifice, which bids men to look to nothing but their own efforts for salvation, which in its original purity knew nothing of vows of obedience and never sought the aid of the secular arm: yet spread over a considerable moiety of the old world with marvellous rapidity and is still with whatever base admixture of foreign superstitions, the dominant creed of a large fraction of mankind." (1)

But both in his method and ethics Gautam Buddh followed the process of Augustus Comte. His method was a positive scientific method, while his ethics is little distinguishable from his positive religion, though of course, it covers a wider field and is more akin to Christianity than to Comtism. Speaking of the latter's philosophy, George Henry Lewes wrote: "Every branch of knowledge passes successively through three stages,—first, the *supernatural* or fictitious; *secondly*, the *metaphysical* or abstract; and *thirdly*, the *physical* or scientific. The first is the necessary point of departure taken by human intelligence; the second, is merely a stage of transition from the supernatural to the positive; and the third is the fixed and definite condition in which knowledge is alone capable of progressive development." Comte's positive religion is based on the *cultus* of humanity considered as a corporeal being in the past, present and future, which is spoken of as the *Grand Etre*. His religion aims at the service and

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(1) Prof. T. H. Huxley's (1893) *Romanes Lecture*,

ennoblement of this Great Commonwealth. That the Buddhist thought ran in the same direction and with the like objective makes his religion the patriarchal forerunner of all modern movements which have for their objective the service of mankind. So far and only so far Comtism and Buddhism are not only comparable, but at one.

The ethics of Buddha does not rest upon reason alone, though it can be fully vindicated by reason. He had himself rested it upon his metaphysics, though he confessed to his venture in that region as being incomplete. But it was nevertheless its shallow foundation, and if that goes, it will have nothing to rest upon, and will then hang in the air. His ethics cannot, therefore, be dissociated from his metaphysics; and the two make up his religion in the sense in which that term was understood in his day.

There are scholars who even to-day deny that Buddhism is a religion. The meaning of that term, so universal, and such a fruitful source of acrimony though at times it has become, has not yet emerged from the region of controversy. There are those who deny any creed to rise to the height of a religion which does not postulate the existence of a personal God. Even this alone would not suffice, since the protagonists of this view would reject as religion what denies to Him the supervising direction and control of man. Islam is such a religion, but Christianity has rejected it in theory and repelled it by force. And yet St. Thomas Aquinas defined it "as goodness rendering to God the honour due to Him" and as "the manifestation of that faith, hope, and charity toward God to which man is, above all, ordained." Sir John Seeley, the author of *Ecco Homo*, would give to that term a much wider scope as including "habitual and regulated admiration," or "worship of whatever in the known universe appears worthy of worship." While Frederic Harrison, himself a Positivist, defines it as "veneration for the power which exercises a dominant influence over life." While, according to Matthew Arnold, it is only "that voice of the deepest human experience," "morality touched with emotion."

That this was the view of the older theologians and divines seems clear from what Sparrow said in his *Sermons*.<sup>(1)</sup> "True religion in its essence and in kind is the same everywhere." Burnet in his *History of Religions*<sup>(2)</sup> wrote: "That true religion is not contained in apparel.....singing and such other kinds of ceremonies; but in cleanness of mind," and Purchas in his *Pilgrimage*<sup>(3)</sup> said:—"True religion is the right way of re-uniting man to God," while Milton in his *Paradise Lost*<sup>(4)</sup> used it even in a wider sense: "The image of Brute adorned with gay religions full of Pomp and Gold." Cicero held: "Religion as the pious worship of God." According to James Caird, "Religion is mainly and chiefly the glorifying of God amid the duties and trials of the world, the guiding of our course amid adverse winds and currents of temptation by the sunlight of duty and the compass of Divine truth, the bearing up manfully, wisely, courageously, for the honour of Christ, our great leader in the conflict of life." But that this is too narrow a view of religion is emphasised by others. So Richter wrote: "Let us accept different forms of religion among men, as we accept different languages, wherein there is but one human nature expressed. Every genius has most power in his own language, and every heart in its own religions; religions are not proved, are not demonstrated, are not established, are not overthrown by logic. They are, of all the mysteries of nature and the human mind, the most mysterious and most inexplicable; they are of instinct and not of reason."

The term "religion" is, according to the New Oxford Dictionary, used in various senses—primary and secondary, literal and figurative; but those germane to the present subject are as implying (1) (a) recognition, on the part of man, of some higher unseen power as having control of his destiny and as being entitled to reverence and worship; (b) the general mental and moral attitude resulting from this belief with reference to its effect upon the individual or the community; (c) personal or general acceptance of this feeling as a standard of spiritual and practical life; (2) action or conduct indicating a belief in or reverence for and

(1) (1877) *Sermons* VII—90.

(2) (1679) 1 *Rec.* III—140

(3) (1614) *Pilgrimages*.

(4) 1.372.

desire to please a divine ruling power ; (3) particular monastic or religious order or rule; and (4) a state of life bound by monastic vows. It is thus evident that we have not yet reached the stage of universal acceptance of its meaning. According to it our belief in the personal supreme God is the essential of religion ; but the moment we come to Theism that definition fails to assist us. Theism, they would say, is a doctrine, but not a religion. It is futile to pursue the inquiry any further. That the notion about religion differs not only from nation to nation and from age to age but from man to man adds further to the difficulty of reaching a common basis for speculation.

The ancient Greek regarded ethics as no part of his religion and religion as no part of his metaphysics. The Chinese of to-day is at once a follower of Buddh, Confucius and Tao. He uses all three without finding the least incongruity in their combination in his religion. As Sir Charles Eliot observes : " Europeans sometimes mention it as an amazing and almost ridiculous circumstance that an educated Chinese can belong to three religions, Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. But I find this attitude of mind eminently sensible. Confucianism is an admirable religion for State-ceremonies and college-chapels. By attending its occasional rites, one shows a decent respect for Heaven and Providence and commits oneself to nothing. And though a rigid Confucianist may have the contempt of a scholar and a statesman for popular ideas, yet the most devout Buddhist and Taoist can conform to Confucianism without scruple, whereas many who have attended an English Coronation Service must have wondered at the language which they seemed to approve of by their presence. And in China if you wish to water the aridity of Confucianism, you can find in Buddhism or Taoism whatever you want in the way of emotion or philosophy and you will not be accused of changing your religion because you take this refreshment. This temper is not good for creating new and profound religious thought, but it is good for sampling and appreciating the ' varieties of religious experience ' which offer their results as guides for this and other lives." (1)

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(1) *Hinduism and Buddhism* XCVI—XCVII.

That conventional Christianity has itself undergone a radical transformation and is now in the process of rapid rationalization, placing its ethical principles above those of its dogma, is in itself evidence of the ever-widening conception of Religion. The Broad Church which includes among its members many distinguished and able men, owes its inception to the influence of the German rationalism and modern science. It influenced the views of such men as the late Dean Stanley, F. D. Maurice, Bishop Colenso, Stopford Brooke and the distinguished divines, Dr. Temple, afterwards the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowland Williams, Professor Jowett, Baden Powell, Mark Pattison, H. B. Wilson and the only layman C. H. Goodwin, who jointly lent their names to the remarkable book "Essays and Reviews" published in 1860 in which they advocated beliefs which have become the creed of the Broad Churchmen and other reforming churches: "They pay but little attention to either ceremony or dogma. They are for extending the liberty of belief within the Church to its utmost possible limits, as some assert, even to the borders of Unitarianism. They attach great importance to the social Christian virtues, to living a cleanly and wholesome life, adopting the precepts rather than the theology of religion."<sup>(1)</sup>

That modern biological researches have begun to produce qualms of conscience even amongst the hierophants of the Church is only natural. Sir Aurthr Keith delivered his presidential address to the British Association on the 31st August 1927, upholding Darwin's "Theory of Evolution." It was followed by two striking sermons, delivered by Bishop Gore on the 18th September 1927, and by Bishop Barnes of Birmingham a few days later. Sir Arthur Keith's address is printed by the Rationalistic Press Association under the title "Concerning Man's Origin." Dr. Barnes, Bishop of Birmingham, in one of his sermons (since spoken of as the *Gorilla Sermons*) on the "Sacramental truth and falsehood" poured scorn on consubstantiation and transubstantiation, which he said, belonged to the realm of primitive magic and concluded by adding that there were always men ready to devise dexterous ways to defend superstitions of which

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(1) Rev. E. D. Price: *The story of* Cf. Rev. W. E. Orchard: *The Present Crisis in Religion*.  
*Religions* 186.



they ought to be ashamed. In another sermon preached by the same Divine in Westminster Abbey, he exhorted his flock to welcome new discoveries with an open mind and revere the great men who made them, but not to yield to those who pretended to offer short cuts to faith. "Darwin's assertion," he continued, "that man had sprung from the apes,"—has stood the test of more than half a century of critical examination; increasing knowledge and careful inquiry have but confirmed its truth. <sup>(1)</sup> As a result, the stories of the creation of Adam and Eve, of their primal innocence and of their fall, have for us become folk-lore. But by the men who built up catholic theology, they were accepted as solid facts.

"Darwin's triumph has destroyed the whole theological scheme. Many of us rejoice, for we regard the assertion that any Church is infallible as alike impudent and dangerous. It was contended by some that while man was physiologically a descendant of the apes, his mind was due to a Special Divine Act of creation. Such a contention cannot be upheld. Mental capacity and power are directly associated with the development of certain regions of the brain. The human mind has been derived by evolution from the intelligence of the lower animals, just as the human body has been evolved from the body of some primitive vertebrate. What biological inquiry has definitely established is—that much that is evil in man's passions and appetites is due to natural instincts inherited from his animal ancestry. In fact, man is not a being who has fallen from an ideal state of perfect innocence: he is an animal slowly gaining spiritual understanding and with the gain rising far above his distant ancestors. Further, it is quite impossible to harmonise this conclusion of scientific inquiry with the traditional theology of any branch of the Christian Church. The man of science admits his mistake without trying to conceal his retraction behind elaborate and evasive formulæ: the Churchman does well to follow his example.

(1) This sermon was delivered in October 1927 after Sir Arthur Keith's Presidential address to the British Association on the 31st August 1927 which revived the controversy on the descent of man

which Sir Arthur Keith said had now been clearly shown to be from Simian ancestry. (See his *Concerning man's origin* (R.P.A.) 12 seq.

"Already Christians, who are not obsessed by traditional theology, realise that the doctrine of evolution, leaves Christ's teaching unaffected. If there be a God behind Nature, He can show His creative activity through the process of emergent evolution just as definitely as by special creation. That He has used evil in His plan is obvious, and it puzzles us to reconcile this fact with His goodness and power. But there is no new problem herein. There is so much goodness in the world, such rich beauty, that we cannot believe that there is evil in the Creator Himself. His ends, we are forced to conclude, are not our own. His ideal man is not the animal, well-fed and luxurious, but the eager seeker for righteousness and truth.

"They should inquire whether personality survived bodily death and as it was a force which came ultimately from God, might they not reasonably hold that it would have an eternal existence and that God would preserve what was worth keeping? Certainly a time would come when the earth would no longer support life: and if there were no life beyond the grave, a philosopher from another planet would then conclude that in truth God had made all men for naught. On the whole, the modern scientific view of the origin of man's body and mind agreed well with Christ's teaching.

"Pseudo-religious propaganda is now more shameless," concluded Dr. Barnes, "superstition is more prevalent, sceptical orthodoxy more commonly joins hands with ignorant fanaticism. And so, true religion, the religion of the Spirit of Christ, is harmed. The reaction is intelligible, because war is demoralising. It breeds fear and contempt of truth and disregard of spiritual values. Let us be thankful that amid so much decay, science has preserved standards which organised religion has frequently failed to safeguard."

This is plain speaking; but it is the truth, in which Bishop Barnes had the support of Bishop Gore, who in his sermon delivered on the 18th September, 1927, in the Grosvenor Chapel, Mayfair, described the introductory stories of Genesis as mere folk-lore, and the Bible as containing "a vast deal of barbarism," with much of "mere fiction." "It is no good playing the

Canute," he said, "you must have the courage frankly to accept the indisputable verdicts of historical science." (1)

Other writers have given equally candid expression to a widely felt desire to build out of experience a working religion and a doctrine of God and Man with a sharp distinction between the spirit of God within, and the creative power of Nature. Its object is to show the unity of God and Man, and remodel Christianity by scrapping its dogmas and retaining only its ethics, (2) supporting it, however, by a revised notion of God which is as un-Christian because it is unanthropomorphic, as it is pro-Hindu because it is pantheistic. "The mystic finds God in all things and all things in God, for of Him and through Him and unto Him are all things to whom glory be for ever." (3) It is admitted that Christianity is a conglomeration of many faiths, while many of the Pagan myths, though devoid of any historic value, have found their way to Christianity, the most prominent of which is the development of the Eucharist and Mass.

The symbolism of the Churches is of long descent: "It is full of material which comes from Paganism, from forms of faith which, we who have borrowed their ceremonials and their actual attitude of mind, have no right to despise. There can be little spiritual difference between the Sacrament of to-day and the Mysteries of Greece. The gods have been changed, the myths and dramas of fertility have gone; the teaching of Jesus has been fitted in. But the cake of Eucharist is descended from the cake of Eleusis, and it came down by tradition from the slain animals and ultimately from the human victims whose blood fructified the fields. The harvest-thanksgiving was an ancient sacrifice. Christmas and Easter are Christianized forms of the Winter Solstice Feast and the Spring Festival. Let them remain; but let them be recognised for what they are. And let who wish be excused from joining them, and allowed to make new paths to a living God." (4)

(1) *Literary Guide*, Nov. 1927, pp. 191, in *man.*  
192.

(2) John W. Graham,—*"The Divinity*

(3) *Ib.*

(4) *Ib.*

If we contrast Buddhism with Christianity, the contrast is one between Rationalism and Dogmatic Religion. Buddha had no misgiving about the heredity of man. His theory of cosmic evolution did not stage man as a fallen angel. He denounced the theory of special creation. He plainly perceived, by the light of his inspiration, the slow evolution of beings and he pricked the bubble of that complacent Egoism which deluded men into a false notion of his own immortality.

That Bishop Barnes' exegesis is an attack on the infallibility of the whole Bible is admitted by the Churchmen, one of whom wrote: "The Pharises and the Sadducees believed in Moses, but rejected Christ; the modernist professes to believe in Christ, but rejects Moses. The two positions are equally untenable. The fact that man was made by God in His own image from the dust of the earth, as recorded in the book of Genesis, is referred to in every book of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. All these books comprising the Bible are so inter-linked that they stand or fall together. Do away with the first Adam and his fall, and you must necessarily do away with the second Adam and the salvation wrought by Him. Do those, who disbelieve the history of Creation as set forth in the opening verses of Genesis on the strength of their scientific knowledge, not realize that they declare the whole Bible up to and including Revelation to be similar folk-lore?" The answer is,—they do, but it cannot be helped. Truth is truth and it will be out, and those who love truth for its own sake have nothing to fear, for they have nothing to shield. If they have to revise their faith, so much the better. It is not a matter for regret, but one for rejoicing. That this is the trend of modern theology admits of no doubt. That it was the basic principle of Buddhism only shows how far the founder of that religion was in advance of his age. The advance of science is the triumph of Buddhism: its fresh discoveries, its best vindication.

The question how far Buddhism answers the test of religion depends upon what is connoted by that term. As previously observed<sup>(1)</sup> there is no unity between nations or thinkers or

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(1) Pp. 464-466 *ante*.

religionists themselves on the meaning of religion and still every body talks about it and, indeed, more blood has been shed in its name than in any other cause.

Taking, however, the term as implying a belief in a Supreme Creator Buddhism was never intended to be a religion nor did, indeed, Buddha attempt to found one. His teaching was purely practical. It was addressed to those who had pledged their faith in ceremonial observances and sacrifices, penance, and self-torture to the utter neglect of their social obligations. Buddha brought their minds from the cloudland of speculation to the arena of practical usefulness. If we remember the age in which Buddha lived and the society to which he addressed his teaching, it would be regarded as truly revolutionary. It was an age when one ruler regarded it his sacred duty to expand his kingdom by levying war upon his neighbours and in this he was encouraged by his religion; since the coveted horse-sacrifice (the *Ashvamedh*) was the one reserved for kings who had vanquished all their neighbours and it was the sacrifice which insured the translation of the performer to the coveted Paradise of Brahm. To teach to such people the true meaning of a sacrifice, the sanctity of human and, indeed, all life, to teach them the virtue of returning love for hate, to let them visualize the value of Renunciation was a task which till Gautam arose, was wholly beyond human comprehension.

It is true that Buddha did not go much beyond his immediate purpose, and so far as he was constrained to go, he regarded his essay as merely secondary and subservient to his main purpose. But even if it were otherwise, what did Buddha teach and how far has the world moved beyond his severe metaphysics? So far as the question of a personal God is concerned, do we not stand, to say exactly, as our forefathers did when Gautam analysed the concept and meaning of a Supreme Divinity? All he said is all that has been since repeated again and again. Even the most inspired religionists have not answered his query—What do we know

about Him ? We are told that God is life, He is truth ; “ the divine essence is love and wisdom ”<sup>(1)</sup> but does it advance us one whit in our knowledge and is it not true, as Dr. Young observed, that “ A God alone can comprehend a God ” ? It is true that man in all ages and in all stages of civilization has believed in a God and he cannot do without Him. But what is the origin of that belief ? Only this,—that the primitive man finding himself face to face with the forces of Nature and overawed by their great power and lustre began to worship them as gods and not being able to inter-connect them, he committed himself to polytheism ; and after a little more reflection that belief was purified and sublimated to a monotheism ; but when he was asked what did it all imply, he had no better knowledge of one than of the other, and the only escape from his dilemma lay in declamations and rhapsody. As O. W. Holmes remarked : “ We are all tattooed in our cradles with the beliefs of our tribe ; the record may seem superficial, but it is indelible. You cannot educate a man wholly out of the superstitions fears which were implanted in his imagination, no matter how utterly his reason may reject them.” But as Bacon observed : “ It were better to have no opinion of God at all than such an opinion as is unworthy of Him, for the one is unbelief and the other is contumely ; and certainly superstition is the reproach of the Deity.”

The fact is that a belief in a supreme power has become one of the heritages of mankind. It has passed from reason into the region of intuition. It is useless to argue with those who, being nurtured in the cradle of superstition, have their mental vision obscured by hereditary atrophy. And it is not wholly unreasonable that man should believe in the existence of a superior power, nor does its existence seem at all unlikely. But it is one thing to say that it exists and quite another to say what it is and in what way, if at all, it exercises its control over human life. Is it subject to its own laws or does it make laws only to infringe them ? There is the rub. And Buddha asked his disciples to refrain from inquiry into this

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(1) Swedenburg.

unprofitable question. In doing so, he has at any rate the support of modern thinkers.

Renan in his "Studies of Religious History" had to confess : "To attempt to define and to show it to the sight implies an impossibility ; that is too clear to derive merit from saying it. All expression has a limit ; the only language which may not be unworthy of divine things is silence. But human nature does not resign itself to this. If man reflects in the presence of the mystery of the divine existence, he arrives, in spite of himself, at this question, would it not be better to leave these figures where they are, and give up the idea of expressing the ineffable ? It is not less certain that humanity, left to its instincts, is not swayed by any such scruple ; it prefers to talk imperfectly about God to remaining silent ; it likes better to trace a fantastic picture of the divine world than to resist the invincible charm which leads towards the invisible." <sup>(1)</sup> And when Buddha is charged with materialism let M. Renan answer : "It is through a serious misunderstanding that we charge antiquity with the reproach of materialism. Antiquity is neither materialistic, nor spiritualistic : it is human." <sup>(2)</sup> And that is just what Buddha was and so was his religion. Buddha's method was the method of Auguste Comte : the result achieved was the result claimed for his positive philosophy. "Belief in invariable laws constitutes the Positive mode of thought which is the fundamental doctrine of true philosophy." <sup>(3)</sup>

To Comte, the universe was a vast magazine of unaccountable facts. Whence or how they came ? These facts we know not ; our business is to inquire into them as they are, and adapt ourselves accordingly. So it was to Herbert Spencer to whom the Absolute was not only unknown but was wholly unknowable. He points out how little the average man, even highly educated man, troubles himself about these questions. "There are many millions of people who daily see sunrise and sunset without ever asking what the sun is. And even among men of science there are those who, curiously examining the

(1) Ernest Renan : *Studies of Religious History* 49, 50.

(2) *Ib.* 290.

(3) J. S. Mill on A. Comte.

spectra of nebulae or calculating the masses and motions of double-stars, never pause to contemplate under other than physical aspects the immeasurably vast facts they record." "By those who know much more, than by those who know little, is there felt the need for explanation? Whence this process, inconceivable, however symbolized, by which alike the monad and the man build themselves up into their respective structures? What must we say of the life, minute, multitudinous, degraded, which, covering the ocean-floor, occupies by far the largest part of the Earth's area and which yet, growing and decaying in utter darkness, presents hundreds of species of a single type? Or when we think of the myriads of years of the Earth's past during which have arisen and passed away low forms of creatures, small and great, have gradually evolved, how shall we answer the question—to what end? Ascending to wider problems,—in which way are we to interpret the lifelessness<sup>(1)</sup> of the great, of the greater celestial masses—the giant planets and the sun, in proportion to which the habitable planets are mere nothings? If we pass from these relatively near bodies to the thirty millions of remote suns and solar systems, where shall we find a reason for all this apparently unconscious existence,<sup>(2)</sup> infinite in amount compared with the existence which is conscious—a waste universe as it seems? Then behind these mysteries lies the all embracing mystery—whence this universal transformation which has gone on unceasingly throughout a past eternity and will go on unceasingly throughout a future eternity? And along with this rises the paralyzing thought: what if, of all that is incomprehensible to us, there exists no comprehension anywhere? No wonder that man takes refuge in authoritative dogma!"<sup>(3)</sup>

Buddh was prepared to categorize what God was not. He was not the Brahm whom the Brahmans had painted as vindictive, blood-thirsty, corrupt, and cruel, requiring men to consign their bodies to lifelong torture and appease him by the slaughter of bulls and even human lives. Is such a god

(1) Why lifelessness? There may be life there as suitable to its environments.

(2) See *Supra*.

(3) 2 *Autobiography* 469, 470.





(16) Indian Museum, Calcutta, Sculptured stone in the Bharhut Gallery.



preferable to no God at all? It is feared that human nature has now become so saturated by the indoctrination of religions that he is unable to resist its influence. "He who hath not much meditated upon God, the human mind and the *Summum bonum*, may possibly make a thriving earthworm, but will most indubitably make a sorry patriot and a sorry statesman." As Washington remarked: "Religion is as necessary to reason as reason is to religion. A reasoning being would lose his reason, in attempting to account for the great phenomena of Nature, had he not a Supreme Being to refer to; and well has it been said, that if there had been no God, mankind would have been obliged to imagine one."

Buddh did not imagine a God when he found none deducible by his reason. He found in the universe the presence of great energy and power; but he equally found in its action no certain proof of a guiding hand. And as regards the affairs of man he found positive evidence of no guidance at all. He, therefore, charged his disciples to work out their own salvation and trust to no eternal agency for help.

In the quest for God, Buddh has been wrongly described as an atheist, though he was only an agnostic. He was atheistic relatively to the Brahmans for he did not believe in their Brahm and rejected their attributes of him as inconsistent with his high conception of a Supreme Creator. Buddh's view has never been superseded by modern speculation. Leaving out the view of the religionists who stand committed to the gods of their own religion, metaphysical speculation and scientific advance has not so far added anything to his reasoned conclusions. A generation ago, John Stuart Mill examined the question and his reasoned verdict has never been seriously questioned. He says: "From the result of the preceding examination of the evidence of Theism and (Theism being presupposed) of the evidences of any Revelation, it follows that the rational attitude of a thinking mind towards the supernatural, whether in nature or in revealed religion, is that of scepticism, as distinguished from belief on the one hand, and from atheism on the other, including (the present case)

the positive form of disbelief in a God, *viz.*, not only the dogmatic denial of his existence, but the denial that there is any evidence on either side, which for most practical purposes amounts to the same thing as if the existence of a God had been disproved. If we are right in the conclusions to which we have been led by the preceding inquiry there is evidence, but insufficient for proof, and amounting only to one of the lower degrees of probability. The indication, given by such evidence as there is points to the creation, not indeed of the universe, but of the present order of it by an Intelligent Mind, whose power over the materials was not absolute, whose love for his creatures was not his sole actuating inducement, but who nevertheless desired their good. The notion of a providential government by an omnipotent Being for the good of His creatures must be entirely dismissed. Even of the continued existence of the Creator we have no other guarantee than that he cannot be subject to the law of death which affects terrestrial beings, since the conditions that produce this liability, wherever it is known to exist are of his creating. That this Being, not being omnipotent may have produced a machinery falling short of His intentions, and which may require the occasional interposition of the Maker's hand, is a supposition not in itself absurd nor impossible, though in none of the cases, in which such interposition is believed to have occurred, is the evidence such as could possibly prove it, it remains a simple possibility, which those may dwell on to whom it yields comfort to suppose that blessings, which ordinary human power is inadequate to attain, may come not from extraordinary human power, but from the bounty of an intelligence beyond the human, and which continually cares for man.

“The possibility of a life after death rests on the same footing—of a boon which this powerful Being who wishes well to man, may have the power to grant, and which, if the message alleged to have been sent by Him was really sent, he has actually promised. The whole domain of the supernatural is thus removed from the region of Belief into that of simple Hope; and in that, for anything we can see, it is likely always to

remain ; for we can hardly anticipate either that any positive evidence will be acquired of the direct agency of Divine Benevolence in human destiny, or that any reason will be discovered for considering the realization of human hopes on the subject as beyond the pale of possibility.”<sup>(1)</sup>

This was equally Buddh's view of the human soul. It was the very antithesis of the Vedantist dogma. To the latter what mattered was the cause, what did not matter was its phenomenal effect : “ Let none try to find out what speech is, let him know the speaker ; let none try to find out what visible subject, action, mind is, let him know the seer, the agent, the thinker.”<sup>(2)</sup> But to the Buddhist, “ Anything whatever within, called soul (*Atta*) who sees, who moves the limbs etc., there is not.”<sup>(3)</sup> This is allied to the Empiricism of Locke and the exact position of Hume (1711-1776 A.D.) who holds the Self or Ego as nothing else, in fact, than a complex of numerous swiftly succeeding ideas, under which complex, we then suppose placed an imaginary substrate named by us, Soul, Self, or Ego. The Self or Ego, therefore, rests wholly on an illusion ; and it is idle to think of its immortality ; since, being only a complex of our ideas, necessarily ceases with them. His speculation into the region of human consciousness had convinced him that there was no proof of the soul existing as an eternal principle in human body, and that human knowledge being limited by consciousness there was no means to predicate the existence of an entity that transcended consciousness. This too he would not emphasize, since he claimed to be a physician, who had come to heal the wound and not to answer questions as those affecting the personality of him who inflicted the wound or the nature of the missile with which it was inflicted.<sup>(4)</sup> The problem is equally the despair of modern thought.

Modern speculation, aided though it has been by the progress of modern science,—Astronomy, Geology, Biology and Physics still remains sharply divided into two opposing schools

(1) *Three Essays on Religion*—Pt. 5; 242-244.

(2) *Kaushitaki rip.* III—8.

(3) *Samangal Vilasini* I—195.

(4) *Majjhima Nikay* I—426.

of those who deny the existence of the Ego as a non-spatial entity and those who assert that the discernible external actions of any organism cannot be explained without that postulate. The one regards the material universe a completely mechanical system, in which everything including the outward actions of human beings can be ascribed wholly to physical causes calculable ultimately in terms of the laws of motion recognized by Physics, regarding the brain and the mind as essentially one, each brain-state corresponding to a mind-state, and for any mental factor it being possible to assign a physical correlate. The other seeks to refuse the theory of psychophysical parallelism, and while not denying the correlation still leaves a certain autonomy to the mind since the physiological action of a living organism of any sort can never be wholly explained by the ordinary principles of Physics or Chemistry, but presupposes some non-physical entity which controls the physical body in conformity with its purpose, unconsciously acting upon the body so as to regulate the latter in the interests of its life.

As Herbert Spencer writes: "No less inscrutable is this complex consciousness, which has slowly evolved out of an infinite vacuity, consciousness which, in other shapes, is manifested by animate beings at large—consciousness which, during the development of every creature, makes its appearance out of what seems unconscious matter, suggesting the thought that consciousness in some rudimentary form is omnipresent. Lastly, comes the insoluble questions concerning our own fate; the evidence seeming so strong that the relations of mind and nervous structures are such that cessation of the one accompanies dissolution of the other, while simultaneously, comes the thought, so strange and so difficult to realize, that with death there lapses both the consciousness of existence and the consciousness of having existed."<sup>(1)</sup> That was the psychological probability Buddha knew. But nevertheless there were even amongst his followers those who took more pronounced views on the subject and they ascribe to the Master the formal rejection of sixty-two views of the

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(1) *Autobiography* 470, 471.

current doctrines as beyond the limits of legitimate research.<sup>(1)</sup> These views may be summarised into two main sub-heads : those that concern the past ; and those that concern the future. The former may be grouped under four sub-heads namely, (1) the views of the eternalists who believe in the eternity of the soul, established by alleged recollection of previous births or by reasoning and logic ; (2) partial eternalists : *i.e.*, those who believe that the soul and the world are partially eternal and partially not. This is also sought to be proved by recollection ; (3) a third group regard the world finite or infinite, finite vertically or infinite horizontally or by reasoning conclude that it is neither finite nor infinite ; (4) the fourth group are mere sophists and depend upon logomachy and sophistry to prove the co-existence of the contraries : that the soul is both eternal and it is not ; that there is and there is not another world. Sanjai of the Belath is said to be the protagonist of this doctrine.<sup>(2)</sup>

Turning next to speculations relating to future life, the various views may be equally summarised into (1) eternalists who hold that the soul survives bodily dissolution, remains conscious, but they differ as to the nature of this soul, whether it has form or is formless, is both or neither, whether it is finite or infinite, both or neither : as to whether it has limited or unlimited consciousness, both or neither ; (2) those who maintain that the soul is neither conscious nor unconscious after death, that it has form or is formless, both or neither ; (3) those who consider its survival conditional, dependent on the doctrine of Karm ; while the last group embraces (4) Nihilists and Atheists like Charvak who denied its survival. The fact is that the Brahmanical and Buddhist Sutras refer to every conceivable possibility from the eternalists to the rank materialists and there is nothing to shew that Buddha had identified himself with any positive doctrine. His clearly expressed view was one of agnosticism with a very slight inclination towards materialism upon which, however, he was

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(1) *Digha Nikay* (Tr.) (1899-1921) (2) *ib.* 1-59.  
S.B.E. II-IV.

definitely non-committal. And from the quotation last made this appears to be the trend of modern speculation voiced by the late Laureate in his memorable "*In Memoriam*" verses :

Behold ! we know not anything ,  
We can but trust that good shall fall ;  
At last far off, at last to all ;  
And every Winter change to Spring.

But Buddh's imposition was rigidly logical and curiously it is identical with that assumed by modern psychologists. For instance, William James, the distinguished psychologist says : " The states of consciousness are all that psychology requires to do her work with. Metaphysics or theology may prove the soul to exist, but for psychology the hypothesis of such a substantial principle of unity is superfluous." Again later on he adds : " In this book the provisional solution which we have reached must be the final one : the Thoughts themselves are the Thinkers." <sup>(1)</sup> So Mr. Bradley has to admit that " the soul is a particular group of psychical events in so far as these events are taken merely as happening in time." <sup>(2)</sup> And later on he adds : " The plurality of souls in the Absolute is, therefore, Appearance and their existence not genuine. Souls like their bodies, are as such nothing more than appearance....Neither (body and soul) is real in the end : each is merely phenomenal." <sup>(3)</sup> And so Huxley referring to Berkley's idealism says : " What Berkley does not seem to have so clearly perceived is that the non-existence of a substance of mind is equally arguable....It is a remarkable indication of the subtlety of Indian speculation that Gautam should have seen deeper than the greatest of modern idealists." <sup>(4)</sup> So, on the doctrine of existence, M. Bergson is prepared to make the Buddhist theory his own. In fact, he uses Buddhist phraseology in shewing that movement, change, becoming, is everything : no things that move and change and become. <sup>(5)</sup>

(1) Wm. James : *Psychology* pp. 203, 216.

(2) *Appearance and Reality* 298.

(3) *Ib.* 305—307.

(4) (1893) *Romanes Lecture*.

(5) "*The Philosophy of Change*."—  
Wildon Carr,



Buddh's adoption of the Hindu theories of Karm and metempsychosis in aid to support his own doctrine, has not received the same consensus of support, though European metaphysicians, ancient or modern, are not wanting who would be prepared to support his doctrine through all its stages. Amongst the ancient philosophers, Plato, and amongst the poets, Virgil, have unequivocally supported belief in re-incarnation; while amongst modern thinkers—Goethe, Kant, Swedenburg and Lessing, Ibsen Herder, Lavator, Schopenhauer, Lichtenberg and Von Helmont, to mention only a few of the German philosophers, and Hume, Huxley, Bertholet and McTaggart of the British philosophers, and Wordsworth of the poets have. It is the solution suggested in the line of ratiocination adopted by Mr. Bradley: "The universe is incapable of increase. And to suppose a constant supply of new souls, none of which ever perished, would clearly land us in the end in an insuperable difficulty."<sup>(1)</sup> Speculation, ancient and modern, on this subject seems to have proceeded upon a narrow view of the universe, since it is invariably assumed that the recurrent must occur upon this planet, but are there not myriads of planets and stars of which we have only an infinitesimal glimpse and can it be predicated that inter-planetary transmigration is out of the question. Science as yet knows little or nothing of life outside the small and obscure orb which is a mere negligible speck in the starry firmament and if the theory has its other limitations, there is no reason to add one more without sufficient data.

Plato was a firm believer of both doctrines. He devotes to the subject a long and detailed dissertation; but his views are sufficiently indicated in the following extract: "But amongst all these, whosoever passes his life justly afterwards obtains a better lot, but who unjustly, a worse one. For to the same place, whence each soul comes, it does not return till the expiration of ten thousand years; for it does not recover its wings for so long a period, except it is the soul of a sincere lover of wisdom, or of one who had made philosophy

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(<sup>1</sup>) Bradley: *Appearance and Reality*— 502.

his favourite.”<sup>(1)</sup> He then goes on to shew that the soul that has led a virtuous life is exalted to a higher life, but sordid souls pass into the life of a beast, and from a beast, he who was once a man passes again into man.<sup>(2)</sup> Apart, however, from Plato and a few others, modern speculation does not support the theory of Karm which is now purely an Indian dogma, one which undeniably possesses a great moral value since it rewards and punishes a man and gives him some consolation and hope that he would be able to redress the wrongs of this life in the next. It makes man patient of human suffering and spurs him towards a nobler life.

The question—that man is not fully satisfied with this life, finds an echo in all religions, and the difference between them is one only of degree. The Christian hymnology bears ample testimony to the view that Christianity itself regards this world as vain and transitory, a vale of tears and tribulation; a troubled sea which we must cross to reach the haven of rest. It is a Buddhist metaphor. The Christian awaits the Day of Judgment and the fulfilment of a new heaven and a new earth. The Mahomedan hopes to heal his sores in the Garden of Allah. The gloomy view of life is not then the doctrine of Buddhism merely. It is true that Buddha lay much, perhaps excessive, stress upon life's sufferings, but he who worked for an ideal could not do less. At the same time, Buddha did not fail to realize the value of life. If he had regarded life as an unmitigated suffering, he could not have denounced self-destruction. The fact is, the moral teacher cannot be expected to observe uniform synthetical consistency. His words must be read not alone for what they express, but equally for what they imply. The sumtotal of Buddha's teaching was epitomized by the Emperor Ashoke in his edicts, in which he exhorted his people to exert to their utmost, practise piety and be compassionate to all sentient beings.

Buddhism cannot, then, be charged for being a melancholy faith and one which thwarts the display of

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(1) *Phædrus* 61; 1 *Plato* (Bohu) 325;      (2) *Ib.*

human energy. As has been well observed : " The opposition is not so much between Indian thought and the New Testament, for both of them teach that bliss is attainable, but not by satisfying desire. The fundamental contrast is rather between both Indian and the New Testament on the one hand and on the other the rooted conviction of European races, however much Christian Orthodoxy may disguise their expression of it,—that this world is all-important. This conviction finds expression not only in the avowed pursuit of pleasure and ambition, but in such sayings as that the best religion is the one which does most good, and such ideals as self-realization or the full development of one's nature and powers. Europeans, as a rule, have an innate distrust and mistrust of the doctrine that the world is vain or unreal. They can accord some sympathy to a dying man, who sees in due perspective the unimportance of his past life, or to a poet who under the starry heavens can make felt the smallness of man and his earth. But such thoughts are considered as permissible only as retrospect, not as principles of life. You may say that your labour has amounted to nothing, but not that labour is vain."<sup>(1)</sup> Similar view is voiced by Dr. James Sully in his work *Pessimism : a History and a Criticism*, and by Dr. Saleeby in an article contributed by him to the *Fortnightly Review* on "*The Survival Value of Religion*" in which he dismisses the future of Buddhism on the ground that " it was a mere pessimism " i.e., " since it preaches the worthlessness of life," it fails to have any survival-value for which a religion must enhance the value of life, taken in quality, if not in quantity."<sup>(2)</sup>

Apart, then, from the practical bias of the European mind there is no theoretical difference between his religion and Buddhism. The one ascribes human misery to the original sin, the other to the doer's misdeeds of the past. But neither takes full view of the inherent defect of human nature, or of the misery multiplied, if not originated, in the

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(1) Sir C. Eliot's *Hinduism and Buddhism* LX, LXI.      (2) (1906) *Fortnightly Review*.

self-assertive display of selfishness. Buddhism comes nearest to enunciating this doctrine. Apart from its doctrine of Karm, which is dismissed in this connection, Buddha takes his stand upon the principle that human misery is the resultant effect of human selfishness. It is the desire which is the root cause of all human misery and the Buddhist is exhorted to subdue it by constant practice. It is the keynote of his ethical exegesis. How does modern thought accord with his view? That self-control is the central figure in Buddhist teaching admits of no doubt. That it has only a secondary place in Western theology is equally clear. So in the Westminster Shorter Catechism (1647) we read: Question—I: "What is the chief end of man? A man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever." To Buddha and Buddhism the mastery of desire was a self-evident proposition which could be proved by the school of daily experience.

There can be no difference of opinion on this elementary truth, But the difference arises when it is put into practice. Buddha had laid down a detailed scheme of monasticism and meditation; and these have become the subject of acute controversy. It has already been seen that only a few centuries after Buddha's death; monasticism was held to be by no means necessary for the practice of self-discipline, though meditation had always been commended as tending to compose and concentrate the mind upon the object in view. Plato held with Buddha that meditation brings the soul in contact with ethereal regions. He says, "For essence, that really exists, colourless, formless and intangible, is visible only to intelligence that guides the soul, and around it the family of true science have this for their abode. As then the mind of deity is nourished by intelligence and pure science, so the mind of every soul that is about to receive what properly belongs to it, when it sees after a long time that which is, is delighted and by contemplating the truth, is nourished and thrives, until the revolution of the heaven brings it round again to the same point. And during this circuit, it beholds justice herself, it beholds temperance, it beholds science,

not that to which creation is annexed, nor that which is different in different things of those which we call real, but that which is science in what really is.”<sup>(1)</sup>

Modern writers have equally endorsed the result of such meditation. So Fellham writes: “Meditation is the soul’s perspective-glass, whereby in her long remove, she discerneth God, as if He were nearer at hand.” And Jeremy Taylor says: “Meditation is the tongue of the soul and the language of our spirit; and our wandering thoughts in prayer are but the neglects of meditation and recessions from that duty; and according as we neglect meditation, so are our prayers imperfect, meditation being the soul of prayer and the intention of our spirit.”

But modern thinkers are not equally agreed on the value of monasticism. It may, indeed, be generally asserted that in this respect Buddhism is the prototype of the Catholic monastic order. Both are pledged to celibacy, poverty and a life of most rigorous discipline. Both have the identical system of self-purification and self-discipline; but while Buddhism of the orthodox type recognizes no titular head of the Church, Roman Catholicism has adopted an order of religious hierarchy. The only comparison possible between the monastic system of Buddhism and Christianity is as the latter stood before its Reformation by the Lutheran movement initiated in 1517. That movement, though it was not directly aimed at the abolition of monasteries, resulted in their dissolution and it proved a death blow to monasticism throughout the Protestant Christendom. It had the necessary re-percussion upon the residue. Roman Catholicism survived the reforming zeal of the sixteenth century, but it emerged from the struggle severely maimed and weakened. Its most important abbeys and monasteries had to be closed down; the survivors suffered in patronage. This movement has given to Europe and America a religion more practical than thoughtful and Sir Charles Eliot thinks that there is as little chance of Christianity making a serious headway in Asia as there is of Buddhism

(1) *Phædrus* 58; 1 *Plato* (Bohu) 323.

becoming a national religion of Europe. The doctrines of the two religions appeal to minds temperamentally different. "Western ethics generally aim at teaching a man how to act: Eastern ethics at forming a character. A good character will no doubt act rightly when circumstances require action, but he need not seek occasion for action, he may even avoid them and in India the passionless sage is still in popular esteem superior to warriors, statesmen and scientists."<sup>(1)</sup>

Long before the European monasteries were closed down by the Reformation, the Indian monasticism, even of the Hinayan school, had received a set-back in the liberty accorded to monks to withdraw from their vows and return to civil life. It had a demoralizing effect upon the Sangh, specially as the new entrant was sometimes promoted to be a Bodhisatv, after which he felt no incentive to continue to remain a stranger to his wife and children. In Nepal, as at one time in Kashmir, even celibacy was no longer insisted on. The monks in the modern monasteries whether Buddhist or Christian have ceased to be active missionaries, though their influence in the promotion of literacy and culture cannot be denied. Thus Buddhism has so far sacrificed its pristine rigidity of monasticism, and the idealism of the founder had to give way to the practical realism of every-day life.

Among modern thinkers Buddha could not have hoped for a more thorough-going supporter of his doctrine than Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), the German philosopher, author of "*The World as Will and Idea*" (1819), "*The will in Nature*" (1836) and other works. He had vindicated the tenets of Buddhism in opposition to the idealism of the Hegelian philosophy. According to Schopenhauer, as according to Buddha, all willing comes from want and suffering; satisfaction is illusory; human life is endless pain, conflict, and struggle; the human virtues are but refined egoism, and only in the feeling of sympathy does the individual transcend his selfish isolation: sympathy is, therefore, the foundation for

(1) I *Hinduism and Buddhism* LXVIII.

all morality.<sup>(1)</sup> It must however, be confessed that in his effort to support his own pessimistic philosophy, Schopenhauer has exaggerated the pessimism of Buddhism and his writings have, it is feared, popularized the belief that Buddhism is unredeemed pessimism, <sup>(2)</sup> which, as will be evident from a closer study of its doctrines, it is not.

Apart, however, from the religio-metaphysical questions upon which Buddhism has led the way upon many points, the truth of which is becoming daily more apparent, the conclusions of modern science have in a striking manner confirmed some of the dogmas of Buddhist metaphysics. In this respect the speculations of the East and the West started from two opposite poles; but they have now met at a point where Indian speculation started and European science has just arrived after centuries of vain struggle between dogmatic religion and inductive philosophy. Indian speculation started with the Supreme Creator and explained the creation of the universe as the handiwork of His Divine Will. It is His energy that permeates the universe in which worlds arise, grow and die. Everything is in a state of evolution and transformation. The moment a given phase is reached, it is transformed or ceases. In these perpetual movements, the present is not far, as the past is ending and the future has begun. In this never-ceasing career, material things are ever in a state of flux, ever-moving, subject to the same inexorable law of birth, development and decay. As such, the earth has its day of birth, its period of development and it is hastening onwards to its dissolution, following the course of worlds innumerable which have similarly arisen, grown and ceased to be. The history of the universe is repeating itself in the case of all living things. Like all celestial bodies they too come into being, grow and then dissolve. The law of perpetual motion is the cosmic law which equally applies to the vital principle in man. The soul of man struggling to purification

(1) See Wallace *Life* (1890); Caldwell *Criticism*; Saleeby: *The Survival Value of Religion*, Art. (1906) "Fortnightly Review."

(2) Sully: *Pessimism, a History and a*

and perfection finds in the body a suitable agent for its own refinements. If it uses it to that purpose, it will no longer need it and there would then be the cessation of re-births. If it uses it ill, it will irresistibly enter a baser form of life drawn by the magnetism of a baser mould.

This is the grand principle of evolution which modern science has only recently discovered in a shadowy form. Bruno was burnt alive as recently as 1,600 A.D. for daring to assert the plurality of worlds and for believing that the world is animated by an intelligent soul, the cause of forms and not of matter, that it lives in all things, even in such as seem not to live, that everything is ready to become organized; that matter is the mother of forms and then their grave, that matter and the soul of the world together constitute God.<sup>(1)</sup> Darwinism has not yet outlived its persecution by the Orthodoxy in America, caused by its upsetting the anthropocentric theory of special creation; though the scientific historian has to endorse the ancient Indian theory that the plan of the universe indicates a multiplicity of worlds in infinite space and a succession of worlds in infinite time, that Nature is transitory of living forms and man, a member of it, is subject to the same control of an eternal, universal, irresistible law, that the aim of Nature is intellectual development, seen as in the individual man as in the entire animated series and in the life of the Globe.<sup>(2)</sup>

The development of Buddhist Psychology falls into three stages. In the first place, we have the oldest doctrine imputed to Buddha himself. It was enlarged by Nagsen in his replies to King Milind; while it was further expanded by Buddhaghosh in his commentary known as the Abhidharm. But at each stage as the psychological exegesis developed, it became more and more artificial, till in the hands of its last expositor it ceased to be a science and passed into the domain of myth. The fact is that psychology could make no progress because in Buddha's days there was no study of biology. Medicine was no doubt studied; but it was studied without the aid of surgery, nor was

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(1) H. Draper's *Intellectual Development of Europe* Ch. VI—pp. 257, 258. (2) *Ib.* Ch. IX-X.



surgery a popular science with those who decried the shedding of blood, with the result that the only materials available for the deduction of psychology were those available from observation and experience. And as these had to be reconciled to the three jewels—*Anitya* (impermanence), *ḍukkh* (suffering), and *An-atta* (No-Soul)—psychological speculation could not transcend that horizon. Hence Buddhist psychology, though an essential part of the Buddhist teaching became later developed into a dogmatic creed. So far as Buddha himself was concerned, he started with consciousness which he regarded as the equivalent of intelligence or mind.<sup>(1)</sup> To him that consciousness existed before birth and continued to exist after death, just as it continues before and after sleep. To the Buddhist, life and death are only incidents in the path of consciousness. So the Tathagat said “Were *Vigyan* (Consciousness) Anand, not to descend into the mother’s womb, would body and mind become constituted therein”?<sup>(2)</sup> “To him, Bhikkus, who lives intent on enjoyment in things that tend to enfeeble us, there will be descent of *Vigyan*.....and where *Vigyan* gains a footing, there is descent of mental and bodily life.....for this nutriment, *Vigyan* is the cause of our taking birth and coming again to be.”<sup>(3)</sup>

The self-same consciousness as it takes a new birth assumes a new *Namrup*—or name and form or a distinct visible entity. That the consciousness which is variously called, the Ego, the Soul, the Self, the *Atma*, the *Chitt* is distinct from the body is proved by the fact that the body is perishable, while consciousness is not. <sup>(4)</sup> They are “merely names, expressions, turns of speech, designations in common use in the world. Of these he who has won truth makes use indeed, but is not led astray by them.” <sup>(5)</sup> The *Namrup* comprises five *Skandhs*; <sup>(6)</sup> a term, which though meaning “aggregates,” comprises the material qualities, such as feeling, sense-perception, and consciousness

(1) (*Chittam iti pi iti pi Vigganam*) *Digha Nikay*, I—213; *Anguttara Nikay* I—170.

(2) *Digha Nikay*: (Dialogues of the Buddha), II—60.

(3) *Samyutta Nikay*, II—13, 91, 101.

(4) *Vinay Texts*, I p. 100.

(5) *Digha Nikay* I—263.

(6) P. *Khandhas*.

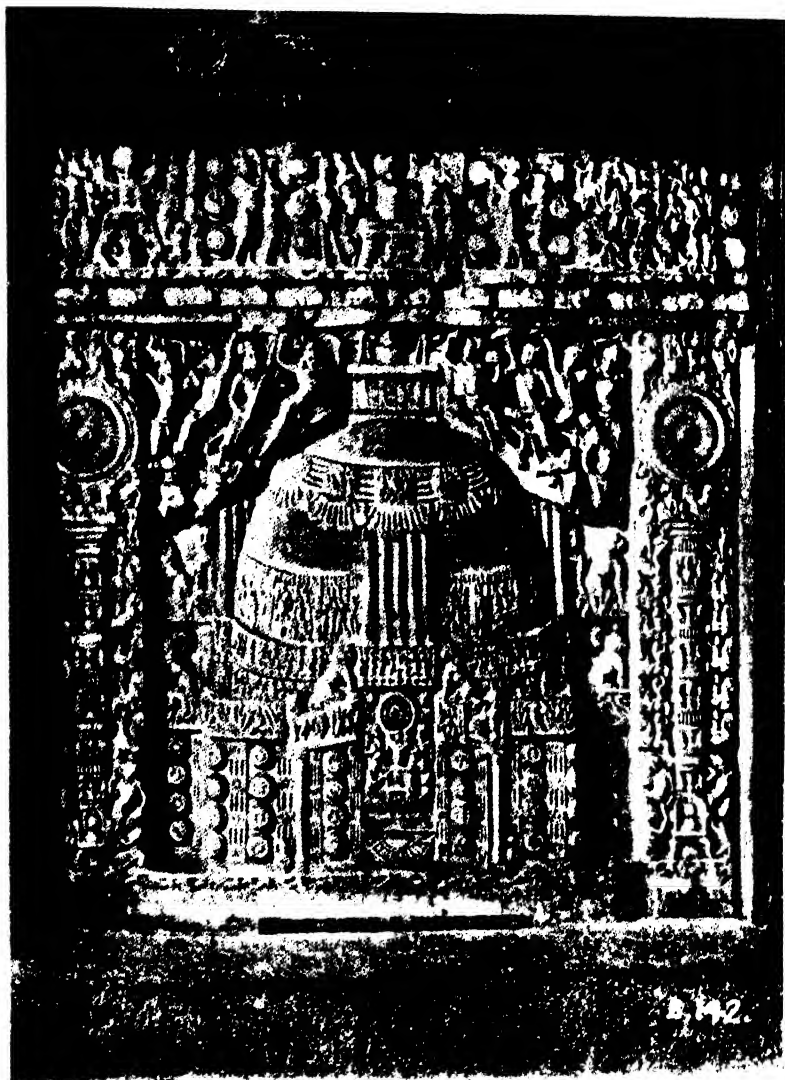
often spoken of as the five and sometimes the six senses, <sup>(1)</sup> the seat of which was said to be the heart and not the brain. Consequently, the word "*Chitt*" was taken to connote the heart as well as consciousness. The consciousness is prompted by the *Skandhs* and is ever changing; but there is no mind apart from consciousness to receive or control it. That consciousness and those senses were affected by impact with the ever-changing, ever-mobile outer world, compounded of the countless syntheses of the four elements, the extended, the covering, the colorific and the mobile. The difference in contact created the difference in the senses of feeling, perception or volition. The external world was assumed as real and not a mere *Maya* or illusion, as it was held to be by the Vedantist Seer. Nor was he prepared to postulate the existence of an *Atman* or Soul in his sense. To him the five senses received their impressions and these impressions remained independent: "These five senses, brother, have different fields, different ranges; they do not share each other's fields and ranges. Of them thus mutually independent, mind is their resort, and mind partakes of and enjoys the field and range of them all." <sup>(2)</sup> The mind is a passive recipient of the sensations; it is not an active agent even when the sensations produce pleasure and pain. Since "because of some tendency there arises perception, opinion, thinking, volition, wish, aspiration. And according as the tendency is low, mediocre or lofty, so will all these be." <sup>(3)</sup>

The later developments of psychology have taken the course already set out.<sup>(4)</sup> *Dhyan* and *Samañhi*, a form of Yoge, was grafted on to the Master's teaching. The mind, which has so far remained in a fluid state, was recognized as a distinct non-spatial entity. Its concentration and direction gave occasion for the elaboration of a system which, though loosely termed psychology, has really no relation to it. It is true it claimed to lead to the discernment of the inter-relation between mind and body <sup>(4)</sup> but it did so by the acquisition of supernatural power and though, as descriptive of the function of the mind

(1) The sixth being the mind—*Samyutta Nikay*, V—218.  
*Nikay* IV: 1, 15, 25, 87.

(2) *Majjhima Nikay*, 1—295; *Samyutta Nikay* 11—153.

(3) *Dialogues* 1—86.



(17) Details of carvings of Amaravati Sculpture in the Government Museum, Madras.



it would be rightly treated as psychology, still it is not a subject which has yet obtained the *imprimatur* of science. It will be found set out under another head. <sup>(1)</sup>

Orientalists lay emphasis upon the fact that Buddhism has made notable contributions to logic. That Gautam Buddha was an empiric logician and that he did not go beyond his intuition in formulating his doctrine seems to admit of no doubt. But as his doctrine became wide-spread and attracted a large circle of savants they naturally occupied their time in developing and illustrating it, by reducing its tenets to the form of metaphysical and logical discourses. Before the advent of Buddhism, logic was not unknown. As a matter of fact the Nyaya philosophy is logic. But it recognised four sources of knowledge, namely, (1) perception, (2) inference, (3) authority, and (4) comparison. This was opposed by the Charvaks (Atheists) who denied that there was any source beyond perception.

Buddhism made a first attack upon these extreme views by repudiating the value of authority and reducing it to the level of inference, and by rejecting comparison as an independent source of knowledge. It equally opposed Charvak's repudiation of inference as a source of knowledge, perception and inference. The first noted Buddhist logician known to fame is Dignaga who is said to have flourished about 400 A.D. His works in the original are lost and are now available only in their Tibetan rendering. To him a concept was not a mere perception but a series of perceptions cemented with the force of imagination. Having thus analysed a concept he proceeds to emphasise the value of inference which is the product of the mind. He was the first to evolve the theory of syllogism by defining the middle term as essential for logical ratiocination. This term he called *Hetu* which he defined and postulated as essential for a logical inference. Another logician of note was Dharmakirti who is said to have lived about three hundred years later. His work on *Nyaya Bindu* further develops Dignaga's theory of perception which he showed as valueless without the background necessary of mind, to co-ordinate and assimilate the

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(1) See Ch. XIII pp. 365-368,

sensations by reducing them into genera and species for the purpose of adding to our stock of knowledge. To him a syllogism had the dual aspect, first as a demonstration of truth to oneself and secondly its value in demonstrating it to others. It is only for the latter purpose that he justifies the multiplication of premises. Otherwise, he is content with the simpler form expressed in the oft-quoted illustration—"The hill is fiery, because it is smoky," which the modern logician would reduce into the following syllogism :—

There can be no smoke without fire,  
This hill is smoky,  
Therefore, it is fiery.

Đharm Kirti postulated the three-fold basis of inference, namely, identity of nature or essence, effect of the cause, and non-perception or non-existence. In this he differed from the orthodox Naiyayiks who regarded observation as the sole basis of knowledge. The Buddhist logicians had anticipated Mill in their invention of five-conditioned method (*Pancharni*) with a view to establish causal connections, (1) the perception of neither cause nor of the effect, (2) the perception of the cause, (3) the perception of the effect in immediate succession, (4) the disappearance of the cause and (5) the disappearance in immediate succession of the effect.

The modern ethical theory branches off into at least three inter-related but distinct lines of thought. The divergence between the ethics of reason and the ethics of sensibility was too sharp to be logical, and an intermediate line of cleavage had to be found in the ethics of personality, variously classed Perfectionism, Eudæmonism or Energism. The first presupposes that human beings are naturally rational and the true life is that which conforms to the rule of reason. The older philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics and Kant, the Neo-Kantians and the Intuitionists in modern times still stand by the doctrine of pure reason ; while their opponents expound the opposing creed of Hedonism which rejects the mastery of reason, though they regard it as the servant of feeling, a minister to be always consulted and listened to with

respect and confidence, but still a minister only and not a ruler in a party conflict of the soul.

Upholders of this view such as the Charvaks, the Cyrenaics and Epicurians, in modern times supported by Hobbes, Bentham, Hume, the two Mills, Bain, Spencer presuppose human nature to be dominated by emotion, though it is and must be tempered by reason. As was to be expected these generalities were considered too sweeping and Eudæmonism seems to strike a middle course by recognizing the rights of reason and the rights of sensibility and reduce them to the unity of a common life governed by a single central principle. The protagonists of this doctrine are Plato and Aristotle, Hegel, and the Neo-Hegelians such as Green, Caird, Mackenzie, Muirhead, Dewey, Seth, Paulsen and others. The Upanishads are inclined to Eudæmonism while Buddha was an uncompromising Rationalist. In modern academies he would stand by the side of Plato, Aristotle and Kant rather than the Hedonists or Hegel. And as the three schools are still running a close race for supremacy, it cannot be said that Buddha's ethics has in any degree suffered in its force or cogency with the passage of time.

The fact is that there is not much difference in the views of three schools: the difference is one of the degree of emphasis laid upon reason or sensibility. Buddha was not a theorist and while his system was rigidly rational he did not obscure his vision to the call of sensibility and his ethics accords with the kernel of the teachings of modern evolutionary sociologists. But unlike them, his vision is not circumscribed by the human horizon of pleasure or pain or the narrow doctrine of human utility, since his teachings enlarge the bounds of human thought and extend the compass of human action. To him this globe is only a tiny atom in the universe, in which the human actions neither begin nor end, but which offers a splendid field for the display of one's faculties, but their effect is never lost but persists and becomes impressed upon living matter as it passes through the various stages of evolution in the ever-changing panorama of the world.

The growth of old sciences and the emergence of the new, has made no marked contribution to the elucidation of the metaphysical problems upon which the modern speculator and the scientist remain equally divided. The problems to-day remain the same as confronted Plato, Pythagoras and Gautam Buddha and the solutions offered have made no advance upon those suggested by inspiration or ratiocination. All attempts to correlate what is known of the growth of the nervous system with the evolution of intelligence, only go to show that structure and function have developed together, and to each distinguishable type of natural mechanism there is found correspondingly a new type of knowledge. Our organs do not perceive but we cannot perceive without them. But whether we can see because we have eyes, or have eyes because we see, whether the structure or the function is logically prior—can never be known and is left to the metaphysician to argue.<sup>(1)</sup> Biologists of this school have no means of going beyond the theory of psycho-physical parallelism. To them the material universe is a completely mechanical system in which everything, including the outward actions of human beings, can be ascribed wholly to physical causes calculable ultimately in terms of the laws of motion recognized by physics, while at the same time leaving a certain undetermined autonomy to the mind.

There are, however, those who claim to have shown that the physiological action of living organisms of any sort can never be wholly explained by the ordinary principles of physics or chemistry, but presupposes some non-physical entity which controls the physical body in conformity with (presumably unconscious) purposes.<sup>(2)</sup> For instance, it is asked, how can we explain the physiological side of an act of recognition, which on the mechanistic view consists in striking on the same trace which was left in the brain by a previous perception, recurring in quite a different context and, therefore associated with a different part of the brain? "There is an *individual* relation between stimulus and effect in man when he acts.

(1) Sir John Parsons: *An Introduction to the theory of Perception* (Camb.)

(2) Prof. Hans Driesch: "*Mind and Body*" 56-64, 147, 148.



That is, stimulus and action correspond with each other in a quite peculiar way as *wholes*, but they do not correspond part by part in all their component parts. Either of those wholes (stimulus or action) can be presented in many different forms which have no resemblance to each other; on the other hand, quite insignificant alterations within a whole can radically alter the whole as a whole. This kind of correspondence between action and stimulus, taken by itself, contradicts every kind of mechanical theory; and there has also to be added, as we know, that the physical thing 'man in action' is made what it is in its capacity for action by all the facts of its history. But this infinitely variable order of action is far from being lawless; it is, indeed governed by special and very strange laws, which science as such will never be able to formulate except in a very clumsy and imperfect manner."<sup>(1)</sup>

Professor Driesch combats the mechanist theory by several arguments which can only be very briefly summarized here. His work is too condensed to be intelligible to the lay mind; but to the student of Psychology, his reasoning would appear plausible though not unanswerable. For instance, when he refers to the effect produced on the mind by a speech in any language, he argues that while to our sense-organs as a physical fact the perception of each word, whether in French, English or German, produces a corresponding stimulus on the brain, the response on the mental side is to the speech as a whole, *i.e.*, while every word produces a different sound and therefore a different stimulus, yet the ultimate response will be the same. If then it is said, the brain is conceived mechanically, our mental life cannot possibly stand in a strict relation of a correspondence to it; since, in order that the two things should correspond, their structure must be parallel, and therefore, of the same kind, which is not the case here. Mechanism treats the whole merely as a resultant of its separate parts, the new merely as a re-combination of the old without any qualitative difference, but this whether true of

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(1) Prof. Hans Driesch: "*Mind and Body*" 58, 59.

the matter or not is certainly not true of the mind. If it were otherwise, there would be no room for invention and new thoughts.

The fact that man can reason and evolve new thoughts gives it quite a different set of relations from the spatial and causal ones which constitute our brain. Further, while matter has only three different kinds of constituent elements, positive electrons, negative electrons and ether,<sup>(1)</sup> and only three different kinds of motions, the mind is infinitely more manifold. This view does not proceed beyond attacking the theory of parallelism. But it does not make for the existence of mind as a non-spatial entity, though its existence is then taken for granted or held established presumably by a process of exhaustion. It is, moreover, clear that since all entities and acts concerned are themselves non-spatial, it is a parallelism between mind in different capacities—the mind conscious, and the mind acting unconsciously on the body.

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(1) Prof. Hans Driesch: "*Mind and Body*" p. 80.

## CHAPTER XX.

### BUDDHISM AND MODERN PROGRESS.

Civilization is said to be the art of living together. As such, Buddhism has unquestionably been the pioneer in civilizing the world. Consider the position of the world before its advent. India was divided into warring states, its people into conflicting sects. The social order recognized no obligation towards society. The religious tenets tended to destroy it by enlarging upon its inutility and worthlessness. Man was exhorted to shun social contact, avoid its entanglements, despise its attractions and fly from it as from a burning house. This being the ideal of life, it permeated all classes of society. The king was a mere tax-gatherer, the proceeds of which he utilized for his self-aggrandizement. The defences of the country were neglected and the frontier passes were an open door for the trans-border marauder. The Indian lived not the life that is, but only endured it for that to be and indeed, even as a ladder for its absolute extinction ; he was assured that all life was an evil and that the process of re-births was a penalty for past misdeeds. It need scarcely be added that such a melancholy view of life could not but fail to create an atmosphere of personal detachment and despair in which self-development and the growth and development of the social order were alike out of the question. On the other hand, a man's existence was a continuous struggle against its continuance and every means of accelerating its termination was treated as a pious act and a commendable virtue. It is in this state of social chaos that Buddhism was born, and while it gave even a wider currency to the pessimistic view of life, still the fact remains that in spite of its pathetic pessimism, it inculcated other principles and enforced rules which resulted in creating a cementing bond in society, in promoting its solidarity and discords which went far to weld the people of India for a time into as near the conception of a nation as it has ever been before or, since, and to

make its government a national government and one which has made the reign of Ashoke and his successors a golden chapter in the history of India.

As Mr. Havell observes: "The student of Indian history may also be led to consider whether the Imperial Parliament of Great Britain, constituted as it now is on more or less empirical lines, is really more efficient as political machinery than was the philosophic scheme of Indo-Aryan polity, in which the common law of the land, formulated by the chosen representatives of the people, had a religious as well as a legal sanction, and represented the highest power of the State to which even the king and his ministers must bow. It will be a surprise to many readers to discover that the Mother of the Western Parliaments had an Aryan relative in India, showing a strong family likeness, before the sixth century B.C., and that her descendants were a great power in the State at the time of the Norman Conquest !

"The great thinkers and social reformers of India, beginning with the Buddha, grasped firmly one of the eternal verities, generally ignored in Western Politics, that ideas, good or evil, are more potent than armaments—for the spirit survives when the body is destroyed. It is, therefore, no less important for the State to purge the body politic of evil-thinking than it is to stay an epidemic or provide efficient means of national self-defence. For that reason, the philosophical debating-halls, in which king and commoner met on terms of equality, always played a more important part in Indo-Aryan politics than Councils of War, Acts of Parliament, or Royal Edicts and for the same reason the political education of the Indian masses in the Dark Ages of European history was probably far better than that which obtains in most European countries in the twentieth century !" (¶)

That the condition of the peasantry and the people in those days was far better than that of their confreres in the West to-day is, Mr. Havell concludes, equally attested by

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(1) Havell (E. B.): *The History of Aryan Rule in India* (introduction) XIII—XIV.

the facts of history. He says: "When Indo-Aryan law and order prevailed in India in the long centuries before the Mahomedan invasions, the economic and political status of the Indian peasant was certainly far higher than that of the English peasant of the twentieth century, if the description of the latter's condition given by Mr. Maurice Hewlett may be considered approximately true: 'robbed, pauperised, terrorised, mocked with a County Council of landlords, a district Council of tenant-farmers, and a Parish Council without powers.

"The British factory-hand and dweller in city slums sings when he goes to war, because war is for him a release from servitude and misery, often far more degrading than the Indian caste-system at its worst. He does not sing in times of peace. He is then chained down to a daily life in which there is no joy of freedom—the slavery of modern industrialism. He struggles vainly to free himself from it by the organization of trade-unions and only adds to the political machine another form of tyranny which often is a menace to the whole imperial fabric. The co-operative trade and craft guilds of India helped the workman to enjoy life, gave him self-respect and fostered his technical skill, and at the same time served religiously the interests of the State.

"Now that it is so common to impose literary shibboleths as final tests of culture and political capacity, it is interesting to observe that at a time when India had reached the zenith of her creative power in arts and letters, a position at least as high as that reached by any modern state, she had achieved a system of self-government probably as perfect as the world has yet known."(1)

What, it may be asked, led to the breakdown of this system which insured the well-being of the multitude, for which the twentieth century Europe still yearns? Mr. Havell ascribes it to the idealism of Buddha and post-Buddhist idealists who carried their principle—that right is might, and as the *Mahabharat* puts it, "The heavens are centred in the ethics

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(1) Havell (E.B.); *The History of Aryan Rule in India* 168—169.

of the State," to the point of neglecting their defences, with the result that the famished and truculent hordes from the Western hills poured down into the fertile plains of India and taught the people, when it was too late, the lesson of blood and sword. Buddha had himself been the witness of the ruin of his own Shakyas and his disciples had neglected to reckon with those who, driven by hunger or fired by ambition, had put to the test their own view of ethics, antagonistic to the doctrinaires who, in their philosophic zeal, had failed to appraise the value of theories as modified by the stern law of necessity.

How far Buddhism is responsible for or contributed to the stagnant civilization of the East has often been raised but can never be satisfactorily answered. That religion does materially influence a people's outlook on life and gives a directing force to their energies cannot be disputed, but in this respect Christianity and Buddhism are both identical in their condemnation of wealth and the praise of poverty. Both systems were communistic in their origin and enjoined celibacy on the part of their monks. But the fact that the West has forged ahead inspite of the one can be no argument that the East has remained stationary because of the other. Japan though Buddhist now ranks in the van of modern progress, while there is a notable awakening amongst the other Asiatic nations whose renaissance is coupled with the revivalism of their religion. The question whether Buddhism of the latter day has not hampered human progress is, of course, another matter. That it has yielded to the sword of the Saracen is undoubted. That it is an ill preparation for the conquest of the savage or the repelling of brute force is equally undoubted. But so is Christianity. The fact is that the primitive instinct of man is lust for conquest, pelf and power. Our Simian refinement does not wholly rule out the love of lucre. And human wars and human exploitation will continue though their evils might be moderated, but they can never be eradicated by the salving balm of religion. Climate, necessity, hunger, the influence of diet and example, national and racial temperament, the instinct

of self-preservation, and numerous other factors move men's minds, which cannot for ever be curbed by the Appealing grace of religion, which may control the evil instincts in some men, curb them in others, but can never bring a millennium when the lion will be happy to lie down with the lamb. These are the limitations of all religions. They must remain the limitations of Buddhism.

That Buddhism became, in some degree, responsible for the establishment of the Mahomedan rule in India seems to admit of no doubt; since the deadly conflict between the Brahmins and the Buddhists was directly responsible for the downfall of Harsh's empire. And the disappearance of that Empire was only a symptom of the general downfall of the Hindu ideals which, in the competition of the rival systems, failed to offer a united resistance to the foreign aggressor, who quieted the disputants by putting their wranglings to the arbitrament of the sword. Islam, like the Law of Buddh, was a rule of life, but unlike Buddhism it was content to take the world as it is and provided for the happiness of average humanity. It did not care to improve humanity or engage itself into the transcendental depths of arid metaphysics. It was content to leave men as men and possessed no ambition to raise them to the spiritual height of saints. The doctrine of Buddhist ideal in its age-long struggle with the forces of Brahmanism exhausted its strength, deteriorated its ideals, debased its rituals, and confused its clear-cut issues. The severe asceticism of the Bhikkhus has at once been the source of its strength and weakness. The monasteries which had been richly endowed by the devout became the refuge of indolence, and a haven of dissolution. The incursion of the foreigners which had appeared and disappeared like a periodical cyclone, became more frequent and persistent.

"The conquest of Sind by the Arabs was made easy by the fact that thousands of male population had adopted the yellow robe for the sake of the easy life of the monastery. They were not like the monks of Naland and other great seats of Buddhist learning, for they were accounted as idle,

dissolute fellows who had no regard for their own reputation or for the rules of their Order. The monastic system continued to absorb a large proportion of the flower of Indian manhood even after the development of Brahman philosophy added Buddhism to the Hindu synthesis, for every great Hindu temple which was built meant the dedication of public or private funds for the maintenance of priests, temple-servants, Brahman students and their Gurus, Sadhus and Sannyasins. And it was the period from the seventh century to the time of Mahmud of Ghazni which was the most prolific in religious building—a time when Hindu monarchs vied with each other in the magnificence and number of their temples, when sacred hills were converted into cities of gods, and when hundred of thousands of skilled artisans were diverted from ordinary industrial pursuits to the pious labour of elaborating the embellishment of the temple-service in stone, bronze, precious metals, and costly fabrics. This was an occupation which the Western political economists regard as extravagantly wasteful and unprofitable when they compare it with the modern 'progressive' system which condemns millions of men, women, and children to the intellectual and moral degradation of factory labour, and employs the highest intelligence of the nation in the invention and manufacture of engines of destruction. The mediæval system, however unscientific and wasteful it might have been, was abundantly productive. The amazing accumulation of wealth stored in Indian temple-treasuries more than anything else excited the cupidity of the Mahomedan invaders and made their pious predatory raids highly profitable undertakings."<sup>(1)</sup>

Modern metaphysics finds no ratiocinative data for upholding the theory of either Karm or its sequent transmigration. It was probably invented as a moral hypothesis intended to buttress the ethical doctrine of mundane inequality of the distribution of pleasure and pain which seems to be otherwise fortuitous and to follow no inflexible law. Nor has modern

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(1) Havell (E. B.): *The History of Aryan Rule in India*—259.



metaphysics been able to discover any fresh data for upholding the existence of a supreme ruling power. It still remains an article of faith. But it rejects the Vedāntic assumption that the world is a mere passing show, a phenomenon without an underlying reality. It however, concedes, as it must, that our knowledge is determined by the gauge of our apperception and is, therefore, necessarily limited.

Though modern thought has in theory acclaimed the highest ethics of Buddhism and Christianity, it regards them both as obsolete in practice, and as a counsel of perfection. There are, no doubt, still a few adherents of the old doctrine who, though unable to attain its unattainable heights, do still endeavour to reach the summit, but the masses remain uninfluenced by its non-egoism. But nevertheless their spirit has gone far to curb the savage propensities of man; and the world would have been very different and much the worse but for the exalted morality which has on many an occasion guided the course of history. Little do we know how much we owe to the impulses of those religions for our social amelioration. It was not a mere humanitarianism which ensured the abolition of slavery. It was not innate charity which has provided the world with asylums, hospitals and poor-houses. Oriental hospitality is a by-word, but it has not arisen from the teachings of the Academy but is the direct offspring of religion. If we turn to the life of Ashoke and those who preceded him, we shall gain some insight into the healing balm which Buddhism has left as its legacy to alleviate human suffering. We are still far from the millennium and the numerous bloody wars which blot the pages of history, the selfish ambition and pretence of nations, great and small, amply testify to the over-mastery of human passions by the Moloch of selfishness against which the inculcations of Buddhism and Christianity have been alike powerless.

It might be a wonder that the innate pessimism of the Buddhist dogma and the sweet reasonableness of its ethics and metaphysics should have evolved a system which made the king the father of his people, induced him to scorn the lust of

power and conquest, and ennobled his conception of duty as the father of the people, nay, of all sentient life, which he strove to protect by building roads, and constructing rest houses thereon, digging wells to quench the thirst of way-farers, building hospitals for man and beast, endowing monasteries, universities and public lecture-halls, remitting taxes to those who had consecrated their lives for the service of man, and above all inculcating the duty of service of man towards his fellow-beings. The life of Ashokeis the life of one who had imbibed the spirit of Buddhism. He had been a tyrant and blood-thirsty usurper of his father's throne, but no sooner did he become a convert to Buddhism than he promptly realized the error of his ways and acted up to the sublime teachings of his Master—that man should not live to serve his own private ends and as Buddh had sacrificed many a life in his previous births for the sake of others, he should be ready to do the same.

Brahmanism had established the institution of caste; Brahmins had appointed themselves as the sole accredited intermediaries between man and God; they alone had professed to possess the key to paradise. To them the people were as pawns in their game of self-deception and self-aggrandizement. Buddhism entered the lists with them by proclaiming to the world the unity and equality of all life. Its founder denied that salvation was in the keeping of Brahmins; he asseverated the worthlessness of sacrifice as the only high road to salvation. To him the equality of all men was an article of creed but against which the Brahmins showed a sullen hostility. To him the intervention of the priestcraft was the noose of a designing charlatan. He denied that God would be propitiated by the sacrifice of life. He refused to believe in the revelation of the Vedas or in their infallibility or supremacy. He placed his own reason above the sacred writing. The Brahmins had maintained that authority by sedulously preaching to the credulous and ignorant proletariat their own supremacy. Buddh was a Kshatriya and other Kshatriyas before him had challenged their pretensions. But no sooner was their opposition found formidable by the Brahmins, than they were promptly

admitted by the Brahmins into the charmed coterie of Brahmanism. Several centuries before Buddha, Vishwamitra, who like Buddha was a member of the royal clan, had to storm their citadel of exclusiveness; but Brahmins had compromised with him and he and his family had been acknowledged as entitled to the priestly privileges. King Janak of Videh had equally refused to submit to the pretended supremacy of the Brahmanical hierarchy and claimed his right of offering sacrifices without the intercession of priests. He too had been propitiated and Yadnyavalky and other Brahmins had acknowledged his supremacy.

But these had been isolated cases of men who had fought for the recognition of their own right, or that of their family or clan. These early struggles mark the growing rivalry between the priests and the ruling house for supremacy both in the fields of politics and religion. While the Kshatriyas challenged the claim of the clergy to God's vice-regency on earth, the Brahmins retaliated by challenging the authority of the Kshatriyas to the monopoly of temporal power. The struggle between the two classes does not appear to have attained the bitterness which it afterwards did though before Gautam's birth, it was still raging. Professor Max Muller adverts to this rivalry. He says: "There is a dark chapter in the history of India, the reported destruction of all the Kshatriyas by Parash Ram. It marks the beginning of the hierarchical supremacy of the Brahmins. Though the Brahmins seem never to have aspired to the royal power, their caste, as far as we know the history and traditions of India, has always been in reality the ruling caste. Their ministry was courted as the only means of winning divine favour, their doctrines were admitted as infallible, their gods were worshipped as the only true gods and their voice was powerful enough to stamp not only the simple strains of the Rishis, but the absurd lucubrations of the authors of the Brahmins, with a divine authority. After this last step, however, the triumph of Brahmanism was preparing to fall. In India, less than in any other country would people submit to the monopoly of truth; and the same millions who were

patiently bearing the yoke of a political despotism, threw off the fetters of an intellectual tyranny. In order to overthrow one of the oldest religions of the world; it was sufficient that one man should challenge the authority of the Brahmans, the gods of the earth (Bhudev), and preach among the scorned and degraded creatures of God the simple truth that salvation was possible without the mediation of priests, and without a belief in books to which these very priests had given the title of revelation. This man was **Buddh Shakyamuni**.”(1)

But it must not be supposed that the social revolt led by Gautam went on unopposed by the priest-craft. At this distance of time, it is not possible to gauge the acrimony or intensity of the opposition which the Brahmans offered to the new cult. But a reference to the contemporary Brahmanical writings shows that the apostles of the older religion left no stone unturned to malign and suppress the heretical religion which threatened their very livelihood. The following denunciation of Kumāril is only characteristic of the class to which he belonged. He says, “These Shakyas, Vaisheshikas and other heretics who have been frightened out of their wits by the faithful Mimamsakas, prattle away with our own words as if trying to lay hold of a shadow. They say that their sacred works are eternal, but they are of empty minds, and only out of hatred they wish to deny that the Ved is the most ancient book. And these would-be logicians declare even that some of their precepts (which they have stolen from us), like that of universal benevolence are not derived from the Ved, because most of **Buddh's** other sayings are altogether opposed to the Ved. Wishing, therefore, to keep true on this point also, and seeing that no merely human precept could have any authority in moral and supernatural subjects, they try to veil their difficulty by aping our own arguments for the eternal existence of the Ved. They know that the Mimamsakas have proved that no sayings of man can have any authority on supernatural subjects; they know also that the authority of the Ved cannot be controverted, because they can bring forward nothing against the proofs adduced for

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(1) *History of Sanskrit Literature*—81, 82.

its divine rights, by which all supposition of a human source has been removed. Therefore, their hearts being gnawed by their own words, which are like the smattering of children, and having themselves nothing to answer, because the deception of their illogical arguments has been destroyed, they begin to speak like a foolish suitor who came to ask for a bride, saying

My family is as good as your family.' In the same manner they now maintain the eternal existence of their books, aping the speeches of others. And if they are challenged and told that this is our argument, they brawl, and say that we, the Mimansakas, have heard and stolen it from them. For, a man, who has lost all shame, who can talk away without any sense, and tries to cheat his opponent, will never get tired, and will never be put down!" (1)

This is not an isolated diatribe, for other writers have lampooned the founder of the new-fangled creed with unsparing venom, to which the Buddhists, though sorely tried, offered no retaliation. They went on with their work of consolidation and proselytization with the result that the masses crowded to their banner, and the new creed, though seriously hampered in its mission, triumphed over its detractors and gave India the master-key of social synthesis. It reinforced the peoples' power of self-help and self-reliance and infinitely widened the horizon of their service, sacrifice and sympathies, with the result that places, which had been only a few decades ago howling wildernesses, were converted into smiling landscapes dotted with vihars, seminaries, dispensaries, and rest-houses for all comers not excluding the dumb creation. It may be doubted whether after the lapse of more than two thousand years, a modern state exists anywhere in the world, where the Government are doing more, or even as much as the Buddhist kings did for their people. European writers readily admit that under the sway of Buddhism, India was in the meridian of history. (2)

Now if we take a hurried view of other countries—the only view possible in a work of this scope and dimensions—we

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(1) Quoted per Max Muller: *History of Sanskrit Literature*—84, 85.

(2) Max Muller: *History of Sanskrit Literature*—34.

find that the most advanced Asiatic countries contemporaneous with Buddhist India were China and Persia in the East and Greece and Rome in the West. So far as China is concerned, it had already a venerable civilization of its own before it came into contact with the new dispensation : and in view of the fact that Confucianism and Taoism were stirring up a social revolution when Gautam was doing the same in India, all that can be asserted with any degree of confidence is—that judging from the voluminous literature evolved out of the comparatively scanty materials borrowed from India, that country must have been considerably influenced by it.

Turning next to further West, it will be seen that the only countries of whose civilization we have any record are Greece and Rome. Of these the former had influenced the latter. Like the Indians, the Greeks were instinctively pessimistic. The philosophy popular with them was the philosophy of Lucretius and the Stoics and not that of the Epicureans. They always felt that they were in the presence of unknown, incalculable powers and that subtle danger lurked in human achievements and gains :

Man finds no fact too hard or high ;  
 Heaven is not safe from man's desire.  
 Our rash designs move Jove to ire.  
 He dares not lay his thunder by.

The Greeks like the Brahmans believed in a variation of Karm which they called Moira which meant a fixed and an immutable order in the universe and a fact to which all men are subject and against which it was useless to contend. Human progress towards perfection, towards an ideal of omniscience, or an ideal of happiness, would be the breaking down of the bars which separate man from God. If it were not irreligious, it was impossible. The life to lead was then of resignation—a life incompatible with the notion of progress.<sup>(1)</sup> But this was the Greek temperament before the Macedonian conquest. “ In the later period of Greek history, which began with the conquests of Alexander the Great, there had emerged the conception of the whole inhabited world as a unity and totality, the

idea of the whole human race as one.”<sup>(1)</sup> This new view became impressed not only upon the Greeks, but also through them upon the Romans, whose theoretical justification was found in their large empire subject to a common order, which the poets in their patriotic glorification designated the world. With the advent of Christianity, this idea was given a wider currency ; but Christianity had itself borrowed it from the Greeks. It will thus be seen that the narrow conception of the Greek world, extended after Alexander’s conquering campaigns, became crystalised in the Greek conception of life and gave to it a new meaning and a larger span in the scheme of creation. It may be reasonably surmised that Alexander had seen this new idea in practice in India where for several centuries it had been both preached and practised. Buddhism may then justifiably claim to have materially, and in one respect radically, revolutionized the theory of life in Europe and so far it may justly claim to have been the pioneer and disseminator of a new idealism which has leavened the social life of the world.

But it is not its only contribution to civilization. Strabo records the fact, borne out by the Sanskrit writers, that Brahmans had rigidly excluded women from being participators in the knowledge of their metaphysics ; their reason being that if women were let into the secret, they would no longer remain the slaves of man. It is true that they had to join their husbands in making sacrifices, and it is equally true that some venturesome women like Maitreyi had partaken of the forbidden fruit, but these were the exceptions and not the rule.

The position of woman in Greece was no better, if it was not actually worse, and a similar position of subordination was assigned to the Roman matron. Buddhism was the first to fling open its doors to women and it is a fact which those who have visited Buddhist countries like Burnah will testify to—that women there up to the present day, enjoy their rights and privileges, some of which are yet not conceded to their Western sisters. Their marriage is a contract dissoluble at will. They

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(1) Bury (J. B.), *The Idea of Progress*— (2) *Ib.*—23.  
15.19.

retain their rights of property and independent residence, while to them, as to men, education is both free and universal. They are held under no restraint by man. The latter, if anything, is under their domination both in business and at home. And these women have enjoyed their complete emancipation since ages past. Where else in the wide world do women enjoy such equal rights?

As regards mass education, it is only within the last half century that some European countries have made it free and compulsory. Secondary and university education is not yet a charge on the State. But in India with the advancing wave of Buddhism, all education was made free and the country was studded with universities, of which two—those at Nalanda in Behar and Taxilla near Rawalpindi—had acquired wide celebrity. They were equipped with all faculties of learning, while Taxilla had specialized in Medicine.

The University of Nalanda was founded by King Chakraditya soon after the death of Buddha and it was enriched by the munificence of his successors, including a King of central India and other places. It was the royal observatory, and taught its pupils both religion and secular sciences, such as Mathematics and Astronomy. Its water-clock, says Hiuen Tsiang, gave correct time for all Magadha. Attached to this and other universities were schools of arts and crafts, for both Buddhist and Brahman monks were skilled in sculpture and painting of icons and in temple-decorations, though the latter would generally look with contempt upon secular handicraft.<sup>(1)</sup> Its name and fame had reached far distant countries such as Tibet and China, as there, in the year 750 A.D., the king had sent an embassy to invite its High Priest Kamalsila (728-776 A.D.) a specialist in Tantra to visit Tibet to combat heresies and bring about a renaissance of Buddhism. Nalanda at one time boasted of ten thousand priests and students. The priests were also professors in the university. Only advanced students were admitted; those seeking admission being required to satisfy

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(1) Havell (E. B.): *A Study of Indo-Aryan Civilization*—141.



the test prescribed by the *Dwar-Pandit*, i.e., the gate-keeper of the Board of Admission. Hiuen Tsiang records that the entrance examination was severe and only about two or three out of every ten applicants succeeded to pass it.<sup>(1)</sup> The subjects taught therein comprised both religious and secular knowledge. Students were free to learn both Brahmanical as well as Buddhist text books. It produced a succession of profound scholars. There were separate chairs for each subject. The university was equipped with an incomparable library which the Mahomedans destroyed, and what was saved from their vandalism, was destroyed by fire.

The University itself seems to have suffered a set-back by the foundation and growth of the neighbouring university of Vikramsila. It appears that this university founded in the eighth century A.D. became at first a sister-university to Naland which it, however, soon eclipsed both because of the superiority and newness of its buildings as also because of the zeal of its patrons who favoured their own foundation.

Nothing remains of this great seat of learning except a few bare walls and a long range of lofty mounds, and a few tanks at Dargar,<sup>(2)</sup> a desolate dusty station on the Bihar-Bakhtiapur Light Railway eight miles from Rajgir.

The other University at Taxilla, at one time a great city beyond the Indus and now represented by more than twelve square miles of ruins to the north-west of Rawalpindi, was, as already stated, another seat of a great university, famous for its medical faculty. Its site is now marked by a great stup 100 ft. high built by Ashoke and the ruins of numerous buildings which surrounded it. <sup>(3)</sup> Unlike Naland which lay sheltered in the interior of Behar, Taxilla stood at the gate-way of India, and as its sentinel it was constantly exposed to the shocks from a succession of foreign invaders, so much so that within a period of a thousand years since the fifth century

(1) *2 Western Records* 170, 171.

(2) Cunningham calls it "Bargaon"—*Ancient Geography of India* 498.

(3) Sir John Marshall's *Guide to Taxilla*

(Calcutta) 1921 gives an account of these ruins; *Ib. Annual Report 1914-15 of the Archaeological Survey of India*—1-41.

B. C., it fell under the sway of no less than seven different nations, namely, the Persians, the Macedonians, the Mauryas, the Bactrian Greeks, the Shakyas, the Parthians and the Kushans. The city had long been in ruins when Hiuen Tsiang visited it in 629 A.D. (1) so that its university must have had a briefer spell of prosperity than its Naland sister.

The present writer had recently visited the sites of both Taxilla and Naland. Excavations on a large scale were proceeding in the former, and they have already yielded numerous relics, which Government have collected in a museum recently constructed for the purpose, and which is well worth a visit. Inspection of the site reminiscent of the ruins of Pompeii, shows that while the bare walls of the houses of a thriving large city were still visible, mostly in a state of preservation, there was no building which could be connected with academic life; nor has anything yet been discovered, which might be described as a relic of an ancient seat of learning. All the same, the ruins testify to the existence of a large well-ordered city with its city walls, streets and the royal court set off by the adjoining fields, which form a splendid background.

The ruins of Naland are different. Here there is no trace of a town, but everything points to the existence of a great Vihar or a monastic university. There are still the uncovered walls, the court-yards, the towers and minarets, the innumerable monk cells, the wells, and everything that points to the existence of a great institution. Here also a small museum recently erected exhibits the relics collected from the ruins. The ruins clearly mark the existence of two structures; one super-imposed upon the other, and, it is believed, that on the destruction of one university, another was constructed on the same foundations, which also in course of time disappeared. In both places the remains bear witness to the spacious grandeur of a by-gone age, when wealth and learning must have combined to maintain the great foundations, to which were attracted students and scholars even from far-off countries such as Tibet and China.

Besides these great seats of learning there were other universities which only live in name. All these conferred various degrees, granted diplomas, held debates, and prize-competitions, awarded literary titles, promoted research, and their professors compiled works which were copied and distributed far and wide. Side by side with these advanced institutions, there were numerous universities in which the young man received his training.

Distinguished *alumni* from these great universities carried their learning and enthusiasm to the distant parts of the land, founding other universities not now so well-known to repute. Nagarjun, the Brahmin student of Naland and afterwards protagonist of the Mahayan sect, founded the university at Suddhanya Katak.

On the headwaters of the Krishna river, Ajanta, of which the caves and the frescoes are still extant, was the seat of another university founded about the second century B. C., compared to which the University of Vikramsila was quite recent, being founded by King Dharmpal in the eighth century A.D. It existed in Behar somewhere on the bank of the Ganges, according to General Cunningham in what is now Silao, a small village near Bargaon in the Patna district ;<sup>(1)</sup> but this is by no means certain, as other sites have been equally identified, Pathargata near Colong in the Bhagalpur district being one.<sup>(2)</sup> The university had six gates each in charge of a distinguished Pandit who held a preliminary test examination for admission to the University. Each of these gate-keepers were presumably in charge of one branch of learning, though Vikramsila appears to have specialized in Tantric teaching. Three thousand monks resided at this University.

We have record of two smaller Universities-- one at Buddh Gaya with a thousand monks, and another at Udanpuri with the same number. All these Universities disappeared and their monks scattered or slaughtered with the Musalman conquest of Behar. Bakhtiar Khilji destroyed Vikramsila

(1) *8 Archaeological Report* 83.

Satischandra : *Indian Logic* : Medieval

(2) N. Dey (1909) *I. A. S. B. Jany* ; School p. 150.

about 1203 ; and the following account given in the history of that period known as the *Tabakaat-i-Nasiri* <sup>(1)</sup> commemorates that event : “ The greater number of the inhabitants of that place were Brahmans<sup>(2)</sup> and the whole of those Brahmans had their heads shaven ; and they were all slain. There were a great number of books on the religion of the Hindus there ; and when these books came under the observation of the Musalmans, they summoned a number of Hindus that they might give them information respecting the import of those books ; but the whole of the Hindus had been killed ; on becoming acquainted with the contents of those books, it was found that the whole of that fortress and city was a college, and in the Hindu tongue, they called a college—“ Bihar.”

Further east, another University had come into existence which likewise fell to the sword of the barbarian. King Rampal of Bengal who reigned from 1084-1130 A.D. founded the city of Ramavati on the banks of the Ganges in the country of Barendra, identified with northern Bengal. Here he constructed a new University which he named the Jagatdal Vihar. It had a short life, being destroyed with the rest only after a century of its coming into existence.<sup>(3)</sup>

Education was from all time free to all and open alike to the clergy and the laity. It was the pride of kings and the captains of industry to perpetuate their name by founding chairs or otherwise embellish these temples of learning. Buddhist India was dotted with monasteries and they were so numerous in Bihar that the province itself became so known.

The decay of Buddhism in India did not destroy the culture which it had imparted. On the revival of Hinduism, the monasteries were converted into Hindu *mutts*, but they soon ceased to diffuse mass education. They still survive most of them in Southern India ; but they have ceased to kindle the light of reason and are the whitened sepulchre of orthodoxy and the dogma of an obsolete creed.

(1) Maj. H. G. Raverly's Tr. (1881) 553.

(2) He meant “ Bhikkhus”.

(3) Universities of Ancient India (1908) *Journal of the Buddhist Text and Research Society* Vol. VII 31.

How far the spirit of Buddhism has influenced the course of modern history can only be a matter of intelligent conjecture. But he who reads that remarkable work by Sebastien Mercier, published in 1770, in which he describes the state of civilization in A.D. 2,440, cannot fail to detect therein the presence of a kindred spirit who ascribed the causes of men's misfortunes as due to themselves. "Man is governed by natural invariable laws, and he has only to study them to know the springs of his destiny, the causes of his evils and their remedies. The laws of his nature are self-love, desire of happiness, and aversion to pain. These are the simple and prolific principles of everything that happens in the moral world. Man is the artificer of his own fate. He may lament his weakness and folly : but he has perhaps still more reason to be confident in his energies when he recollects from what point he has set out, and to what heights he has been capable of elevating himself." (1) If this is not Buddhism what else is it? And it was a potent cause of the French Revolution (1789 A.D.).

And Mercier was not the only apostle of the new cult. Fourier attempted to co-ordinate facts in the moral world as Newton had, before him, co-ordinated those in the physical world. He argued that human passions have hitherto been the sources of happiness. So far he was on the right track ; but when he concluded of self that it was possible to reconcile self-indulgence with a similar passion in others, he fell into the error from which he found no escape except through the quagmire of an absurd utopia. In order to reconcile the mutually repellent forces of selfishness, he proposed to alter the whole structure of society by enlarging the compass of family as a social unit of about 1,800 persons who were to live and own property in common. Fourier believed in metempsychosis, and, like Pythagoras, he could recall the past. His ontological view is a weak reflex of Buddhism, but it was nonetheless its direct outcome. (2) It enabled him to found a sect which had a considerable body

(1) L'am 2,440 ; Bury (J. B.) *The Idea of Progress*—Ch. X, 192-201.

(2) *Theorie de L'unité universelle.*

of devoted followers. Beranger acclaimed his "discovery" and, according to an English writer, "the social theory of Fourier is at the present moment (1847) engrossing the attention and exciting the apprehensions of thinking men, not only in France but in almost every country in Europe."<sup>(1)</sup>

France is to modern Europe what Greece was to the ancients, a nursery of new ideas, a clearing house of the old. No history of human progress can ignore the great intellectual movements of which France was the trumpeter. Her cry for "Liberty, Equality, and Universal Brotherhood" became a passionate appeal to the people, only after she had shaken off the incubus of religion as the sole dictator of society and imbibed the new spirit diffused by the Encyclopaedists and those great idealists whose cardinal creed scorned the hope of resurrection and put in its place the service of man. Candorcet, and after him St. Simon, and his lineal successor Auguste Comte, were dreamers, but dreamers whose dreams were soon translated into blood and iron. Men seldom act unless their idealism becomes the main-spring of action. They are incapable of concerted action until the proletariat begins to see it in a vision and begins to feel its abiding presence.

In the world's great movements it is not the result so much as the preparatory stage upon which due emphasis is justly laid by the historian. That epoch in a nation's history must take account of the national temperament created or modified by multitudinous causes, natural and adventitious: climate is one of them, religion another. The influence of climate and soil has been often underrated, if not over-looked, in tracing the evolution and development of society. The force of an idea has not been always appraised at its true value. You may kill the idealist, but you cannot destroy his idea which persists and only dies when its vitality is spent. Nay, if it embodies even a germ of Truth, it is wholly indestructible.

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(1) Quoted per Prof. Bury in *The Idea of Progress*—281.

The French Encyclopædists had passed current the supremacy of reason as superior to the dogma of religion. It tended to light a fire in which conflicting ideas were tested. The dross perished, but the pure gold emerged shining and bright, purified and burnished by the impact of heat of that furnace. In this great conflict which culminated in the French Revolution and is transforming the thoughts of all Europe, little account is taken of the self-same problems which, over two thousand years before had confronted the sage of Kapilvastu who had given to the world an accurate analysis of human psychology, and with it a solution for the establishment of a new order in which the larger vision of life was portrayed in colours, which the Western savants have not even yet been able to view in the full light of that rationalism which to the thinking mind is the only dependable lodestar.

To St. Simon, as to Gautam, the goal of human development is happiness. But how is that goal attainable? to the myopic vision that goal lies in the immediate environments of life. To him the only environment is the universe. St. Simon, and his disciples had dimly foreshadowed the attainment of social perfection by the construction of a system<sup>(1)</sup> the details of which were left to his disciples,—Olinde Rodrigues and Enfantin, to develop. They founded a Journal in 1825, the *Producteur*, which advocated the formulation of a new general doctrine as essential for the regeneration of society. The cardinal doctrine of this school was that the society of the future must be socialistic: "The new social doctrine must not only be diffused by education and legislation, it must be sanctioned by a new religion. Christianity will not serve, for Christianity is founded on a dualism between matter and spirit, and has laid a curse on matter. The new religion must be monistic, and its principles are, briefly: God is one, God is all, that is, all is God. He is universal love, revealing itself as mind and matter. And

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(1) (1814) *D'la reorganisation de la Societe Européenne III.*

to this triad correspond the three domains of religion, science, and industry." (1) This is the *Advaït* philosophy of the Vedantist, re-discovered in France—an old idea worked out with all its details, of which a seed cast on the high-way of ancient Europe lay dormant for ages, till it was wafted by the wind to take root in the congenial soil of modern Europe.

As previously stated, Comte, and before him Turgot had enunciated the Law in three stages, i.e., when the natural phenomena were explained by the intervention of the deities, by abstractions, and finally culminating in their explanation by scientific methods of observation and experiment.

Judged by this test, Buddh was not only the earliest exponent of the new social system, but he was equally the first in the field to elaborate it. It was he who first proclaimed the equality of man, their fraternity and universal brotherhood. It was he who first declaimed the worthlessness of sacrifice to the gods and taught man the value of social service. It was he who emancipated man from the thralldom of religion. It was he again, who released man from the iron heel of a confederacy of priests. And it was he who first told man to exercise his reason and be not the dumb driven cattle meekly following the dogma of religion.

In spite of its vaunted civilization and culture, Europe is only now awakening itself to its heavy incubus which the intelligentia and the working classes are alike trying to shake off. It is perhaps a sign of the times that the two great revolutions in recent years have both been anti-religious, that is anti-Christian. The French Revolution swept away Christianity as a State religion, and the Russian Revolution has been even more hostile to all religions and is aggressively atheistic.(2) That wave is passing through the entire civilized world. In China the revolution was as anti-dynastic, as it was anti-Christian and pro-Buddhist, while elsewhere it is said "that Christianity, which alone could come into reckoning

(1) Bury (J.B.): *The Idea of Progress* 288.

(2) Makeev and O'Hara: *Russia* 287—292.



for every unbiased mind, has quite obviously exhausted its mandate, has for ever lost its influence over the great masses of the working population as in the broadest circle of the intellectual.”<sup>(1)</sup>

The question whether life is worth the living has been answered by the European group of thinkers in the affirmative. To them it admits of no controversy. To Buddh everything depended upon the life. The little lives of men, their sorrows and sufferings were to him a source of painful anxiety. He would, equally with the European savants answer in the affirmative, but unlike them he would postulate two conditions—*first* that the true meaning of life must be understood, and *secondly*, the living must not take stock only of the living, but take long views of the vast ocean of existence in which they are only a tiny atom. This idealism of life has, like a world-wave reverberated through the East and the West and it finds its echo, sometimes faint, sometimes strong, sometimes recognizable, sometimes not, in the modern speculative idealism of Europe.

Reference has already been made to the writings of the great race of the French pre-Revolution and post-Revolution savants. Their influence was by no means transient or local. There are scarcely any points of Buddhist psychology, ethics or metaphysics for which parallelisms cannot be found in the recent speculative literature of Europe. Buddh had asserted that the true measure of morality is not the salvation of the individual but his ethical elevation. To him, as to Fichte and Hegel, progress is the principle of ethics. He completely rejected the individualism of Kant or that of the Christian ethics. But while Fichte and Hegel part company on the goal of human development, neither of them has marched more than a pace with Gautam. Nor has the Western science yet fully grasped the full meaning of the law of cosmic evolution which the great Seer propounded to the assembled Bhikkhus.

<sup>(1)</sup> Grimm : *Doctrine of Buddh* (Preface) X.

Charles Darwin in his *magnum opus*, on the *Origin of Species*, published in 1859, was the first European biologist to demonstrate the fallacy of the dogma of the fixity of species and the truth of organic evolution. But Buddha had more than two thousand years before him enunciated a wider doctrine, the truth of which science is still striving to test. But European speculation has no doubt that, at any rate within limits, it does certainly explain the development of the universe. In his *Synthetic Philosophy*, Herbert Spencer shows that the laws of change are discoverable which control all phenomena alike, inorganic, biological, psychical and social. This is an extension of the doctrine, for the reception of which the earlier researches of Darwin had paved the way. It extends the doctrine of evolution from the region of biology to the higher plane of social ethics, and in doing so Spencer was merely following the well-beaten path, of which Gautam was the earliest protagonist. He had applied it to the still wider range of cosmic creation. And it was not a happy guess, but the first principle of his inductive philosophy in which each step was tested and its advance measured.

That Buddhism was not oblivious of the grandeur of human efforts is testified to by the pioneering efforts for encouraging the study of medicine, chemistry, physics, astronomy and the fine arts which, with some of the finest efforts of the chisel and the brush still extant, bear eloquent tribute to the æsthetic influence imparted by that religion. By the reduction of idealism to a concrete form, art both expounds and vivifies religion, it gives visual representation to the inward thoughts, hopes and aspirations, longings and desires of man. It is the universal script which needs no learning to read and no grammar to understand.

#### THE BUDDHIST ART.

To the Buddhist Nature was no longer a myth and a mystery, its forces no longer a puzzle. To him the sorrow and sighs of evanescence had been transfigured into inspiring

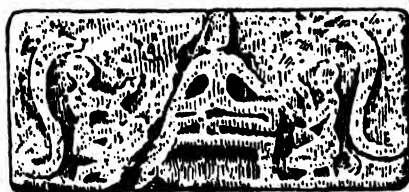
and delightful symbols of that eternity which was unchanging and changeless, absolute and not only relative, eternal and intelligible and not only elusive and inscrutable. To the pre-Buddhist, the ideal was a distant phantom—his hand moved, but trembled with the doubts and uncertainty of its objective. To the Buddhist, the phantom became a reality and gave firmness and confidence to his hand which glided with the certainty and confidence of the vision which had penetrated the enigma of the universe. To his forbears, the unity was invisible or but dimly discerned amidst the diversity of Nature. To him, the unity in diversity was the visible soul of creation, for him the unity of all existence was an article of faith, which the Master had again and again demonstrated within the space of his own life.

The advent of Buddhism gave the people new imagery born of a higher conception of the universe and of the human life in relation to it. In extending the horizon of Self to all cosmic relations, in bursting the bond of the narrow frame of the human body and expanding the range of human vision to the boundless empyrean, Buddha created a new world, a new vision which the sculptor and the painter strove to portray in the allegorical edifices, statues, frescoes and paintings which have made Buddhist Art as wide as the universe, as deep as human mind can plumb, and deeper still, as far as human imagination can fathom.

In the age that had dawned before the birth of the Master, Indian art had already reached a high degree of development. The Indians had been pioneers of work in iron and steel; their famous Damascus steel, prized for its toughness and cutting edge, was an article of trade from India to the Persian Gulf, from whence it was exported to Europe. Ezekiel<sup>(1)</sup> refers to Dan and Javan trading in Tyre with "bright iron cattia and calamus" and other Indian products. The Rig-Ved mentions golden armour and golden chariots as well as decorations of gold and jewels. But at least 2,000 years before the Rig Ved, the genius of the Indian artist had mastered the secret of artistry of which the excavations,

(1) Ch. XXVII.

recently made at Mohenjo-daro in Sindh, are a revelation to those who can extend their imagination to an age five or six thousand years ago, when the civilization and culture of India was markedly in advance of that prevailing in contemporary Babylon and Egypt. The Indians could then turn out artistic ornaments of silver and gold, copper-plated with gold of blue faience, ivory, cornelian, jadsite and multi-colour stones of various kinds. They moulded and made fine statues, busts and animal figures in terracotta and plaster of Paris, carved in marble and stone.<sup>(1)</sup>

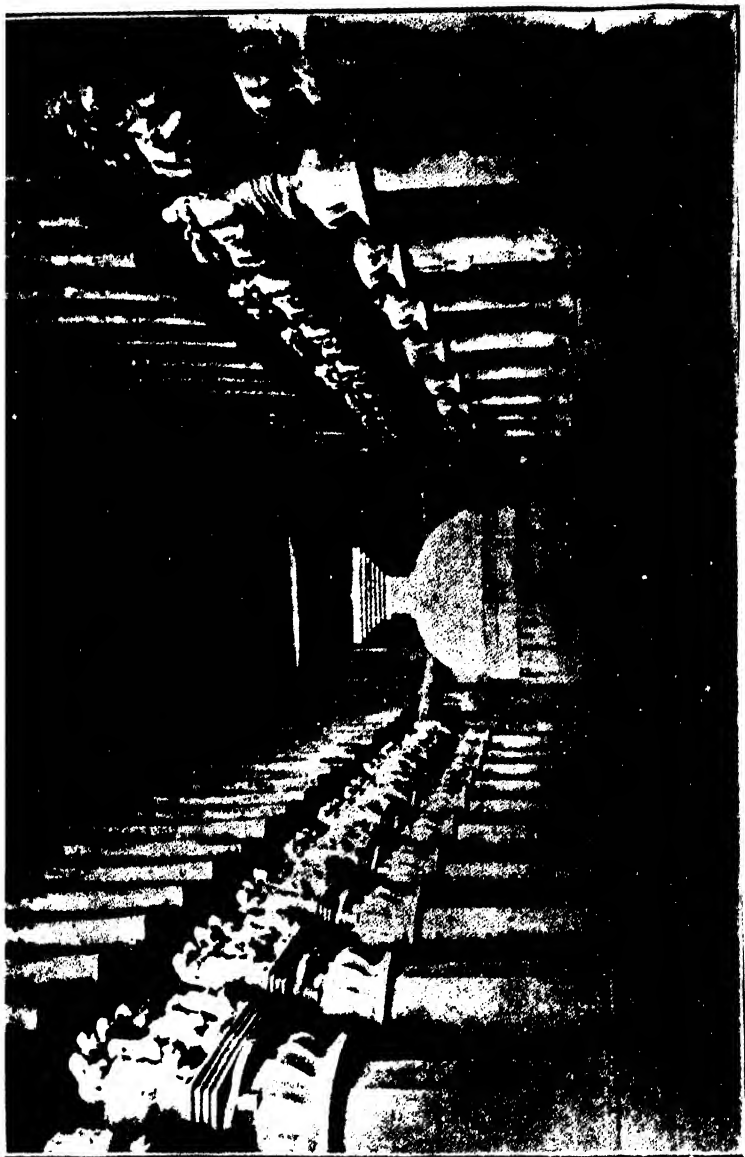


(14) Naga Seal from Mohenjo-daro.

(15) Brahmi bull Seal from Mohenjo-daro.

The Buddhist Art is a sermon in stones, a homily in colours—of the community and cohesion of sentient life, of its fellowship and inter-dependence, of its single purpose and of its sweetness, when emancipated from the care and corroding desires. The earliest painter had portrayed the dread and awe of human ignorance. The Buddhist artist delineated the quiet assurance and sublimity of Nature in unison with the highest aspirations of man, born of human knowledge. The cramped vision of the primitive sage, broad-based by the boundless sympathy of the disciples of Gautam, added the flower and fragrance to the inert stone and clay and made their figures vocal of the message of peace and tranquillity with which the Master's voice had filled the air. The music of the spheres, of which the poet had dreamt, became the reverberating note

(1) *Archæological Notes on Discoveries at Mohenjo-daro* (1926-27) 7.



(18) Karla (District Poona) Chaitya cave—view of interior.



which filled the cells of the monks and vihars in the grove, to which the believers resorted as to the embrace of one who had emerged from the region of dream-land into the visible plane of reality.

Before the discoveries at Mahenjo-daro, the only trace we had of the Indian art was that of the wood-carvers which in the third century B. C. developed into stone-statuary. But these discoveries show that over two thousand years before that era, Indians had acquired considerable skill in stone-statuary and that they had acquired some proficiency in delineating with some accuracy the outlines of human muscles and arms, while with the softer materials their delineation was admirably accurate. The question whether the Indian sculptor had learnt his craft from Babylon and Egypt or acquired it on his own initiative has not been settled, but the probability would seem to warrant the latter conclusion.

But apart from these examples of primeval statuary recently discovered, we have nothing but an empty show-case to stand for the archæological finds of the era preceding the reign of Ashoke, for though Buddhism had then reached its summit of popularity, there is no trace of any specimen of the Master's presentment—the reason being the Master had following the vedic and tradition forbidden the perpetuation of his likeness, having declared that on the attainment of his Nirvan he would only live in his Law.<sup>(1)</sup> This injunction was loyally observed, so that in the earlier sculpture of Buddhist scenes the presence of the Master was indicated by an empty throne, an umbrella, his *charans* or the footprints, while his birth was indicated by a lotus, his renunciation, by a horse with an empty saddle, and his enlightenment, by the figure of the Pipal tree and his Law, by the Wheel: "There are four places, O Anand," said the Tathagat, "which an honourable worshipper should visit with emotion. Where are these four? They are those where the Tathagat for the first time received illumination and preached and those where for the last time he was

(1) See pp. 529, 530 *post*.

born and died." (1) These places were consecrated by the erection of stupas enclosing a portion of his remains. These were multiplied, (2) as time and circumstances modified the view of the Master's inculcation, and with the accommodation of his doctrine to the exigency of the moment, resort was had to iconographic embellishments to popularize the creed and depict its tenets in pictorial designs which appeal to the multitude. Of these two examples of indigenous art are to be found at Bharhut and Sanchi; of the former, Fergusson remarks—"Such animals, such as elephants, deer and monkeys are better represented there than in any sculpture known in any part of the world; so too are some trees, and the architectural details are cut with an elegance and precision that are very admirable. The human figures too, though very different from our standard of beauty and grace, are truthful to nature, and where grouped together, combine to express the action intended with singular felicity. For an honest purpose like pre-Raphaelite kind of art, there is probably nothing much better to be found elsewhere." (3)

The indigenous art was, however, greatly refined in the second century B. C. by the influence of the Greek sculpture which added a greater naturalness, beauty and proportion to the figures and designs of the native artist; but otherwise its influence upon the Indian art "was purely technical in character and was in no way the spiritual or intellectual force which shaped its ideals and ordered its forms of expression." (4) These improved examples of the Græco-Buddhist art are spoken of as the Gandhar sculptures: Gandhar being the corruption of modern Candahar where the improved art was first practised. Jaatak

(1) *Parinirvan* V—16-22.

(2) In Burma with a population of 13 millions the pagodas are said to number 4 millions, most of them consigned to time for their preservation, dilapidation or decay, with the result that every village presents the appearance of a new settlement in the midst of pagoda ruins. an appalling waste of devotional energy and money which the *Festivals* would have liked spent upon the alleviation of human suffering. Will the Burmese Buddhists take this hint and divert their pious acts to the endowment of schools, colleges and hospitals, the construction of wells and

the planting of fruit trees and other objects of public utility?

(3) 2, Fergusson: *History of India and Eastern Architecture* (2nd Ed.)—36.

The Tibetan historian of Indian Art ascribes these works to the Devas—Faranath (since 1857), a Tibetan Monk, whose real name was Kun-Sujing, born 1575, work composed in 1608, extracted by. Basiliev, German Tr. by Schiefelst, 1869, extracts in (1875) *Indian Antiquary* 101-104.

(4) Havell (E. B.): *A History of Indo-Aryan Civilisation*—169.



which gave the life-stories of Buddha in his previous births, both as man and animal, gave the Indian sculptor and painter new materials for his imagery, while the conversion of the kings to the new creed gave him the necessary patronage for the exercise of his art, to which the few remains from the iconoclastic vandalism of the Mahomedans still testify.

The most notable survivors of Indian painting are those at Ajanta of which Lady Herringham<sup>(1)</sup> wrote the following critique: "The outline is in its final state finer, but modulated and realistic, and more often like the calligraphic sweeping-curves of the Chinese and Japanese. The drawing is, on the whole, like mediæval Italian drawing. The artists had a complete command of posture—their knowledge of the types and positions, gestures and beauties of hands is amazing. Many racial types are rendered; the features are often elaborately studied and of high breeding, and one might call it stylistic breeding. In some pictures, considerable impetus of movements of different kinds is well suggested. Some of the schemes of colour-composition are most remarkable and interesting, and there is a great variety. There is really no other portrayal of a dark race by themselves. The quality of the painting varies from sublime to grotesque, from tender and graceful to quite rough and coarse. But most of it has a kind of emphatic, passionate force, a marked technical skill very difficult to suggest in copies done in a slighter medium." To which Mr. Dey adds: "It is impossible for any one who has not seen them with his own eyes, to realise how great and solid the paintings in the caves are; and wonderful is their simplicity and religious fervor."<sup>(2)</sup>

The dome and the technique of that poem in marble, the Tajmahal of Agra, is Buddhist, and not Italian as is sometimes supposed. Mr. Havell writes: "The dome of the Taj is not related to that of Humayun's tomb; it is not an Italian, but a Hindu or Indian type.....Now, if we refer to the orders of Hindu classic architecture, embodied in the Sanskrit technical books—known as the Shilpa-Sastras,

(1) II—*Indian Society*, 14, 18.

(2) Dey: *My Pilgrimage to Ajanta and Bagh* (London 1925) II.

a summary of which is given in Ram Roy's valuable but fragmentary 'Essay on the Architecture of the Hindus, we shall find the connecting links between the dome of the Taj, and its Buddhist prototypes, and see the derivation of its three divisions, or members. The sufficient parts of the dome of a Dravidian temple—*Vimana* are there set forth in minute details.

"Above the *ad'hithana* or base which contains the cell or shrine of the deity, there are three main groups of members. First there is the *griva*, the neck of the dome, which is the drum or polygonal base on which it rests. The *griva* is crowned by a projecting cornice called the *lupa-mula*. Above this, is the *sikkar* or main portion of the dome itself, which is bulbous—shaped like that of the Buddhist dagoba, and springs from a composite lotus-moulding consisting of three parts, two rows of lotus-petals connected by a head-moulding called the *mala Buddh*." (1)

Other noble buildings, e.g., Sher Shah's tomb, are, equally, in conception, as purely Indian as any Buddhist or Hindu temple. (2) Mr. Havell opines that the Buddhist conception dominates all historic monuments in India wrongly classed as belonging to the Indo-Persian model. It reached its summit in the Gupta art, culminating in a normal cycle of evolution. Startling changes in architecture, sculpture and even painting then reveal themselves as developments from crudity to classicism, from balanced serenity to dramatic vigour, tending later, when the message overpowered the medium, to exaggeration and decadence.

Buddhism had enriched not only the Indian art, but its wider view of life and its all-embracing sympathies gave a fresh stimulus to the art of China and Japan which has given to the world some of the finest specimens of its artistic conceptions. As had been already stated, Buddhism was introduced into

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(1) Havell (E. B.)—*Indian Architecture, Persian* criticized and controverted—*Ib.* 24, 25, 26, *contra* Mearns. Fergusson and *Ib.* 155, 156.  
 Vincent Smith who describe it as "Indo- (2) *Ib.* 157.

China a few decades before the dawn of the Christian era. The introduction of the new religion carried in its train a new art, of which the specimen in bronze of the year 435 A.D. and stone-sculpture of 457 A.D. following the Kushan type, are in the Muthra Museum, while the Chinese Pagoda is only a transformed Indian stupa of Kanishk's type erected at Peshawar. A fresh stimulus to copying Indian designs was given by the Chinese pilgrims to India, who had taken with them not only the Buddhist books but also their images and relics which moulded the art of Japan, whose aesthetic elaboration of its details has, however, left no external trace of similarity with its Indian prototype.<sup>(1)</sup>

But generally speaking, wherever Buddhism penetrated as a religion, it also carried with it its artistic appanage, and while, therefore, the entire Eastern world has been influenced by the artistic equipment of Buddhism, it has, like the religion itself, been modified and transformed in accordance with the local influences, genius and aptitude of the people.

#### SYMBOLISM OF BUDDHIST ART.

No reference to Buddhist art would be complete without a reference to its symbolism. It is the pictorial language in which the artist conveys his ideas. Of all Buddhist monuments, the stupa stands pre-eminent both in its ubiquity as well as its allegorical meaning. The stupa was not invented by the Buddhist. It existed from at least the Vedic times, when the remains of the saint were buried, rather than cremated, it being believed that his body, already pure, did not need purificatory rite of cremation. It was covered with a

(1) But Herr Von le Coq, Director of the Berlin Museum (Indian Section) of Ethnology ascribes the Indian and Chinese images of Buddha as only adaptations of the Greek gods of Apollo and Bacchus and those Buddhist saints as their modified images. He says that his travels throughout Central Asia and

China have convinced him of the close connection between North-Western India and China with Greece from three to five centuries B.C. and adds that in "China the root of all Buddhism-Chinese art is the Greek classical art just as the same Greek art is at the bottom of all our European art."

heap of earth which in course of time was replaced by masonry structures, embellished with elaborate designs, for which inspiration was sought from the tenets of the creed. Thus, the Hindu, the Buddhist, and the Jain stupas soon became carved stories of their faith. As Buddhism became sub-divided into two main sects, each impressed its own individuality upon its distinctive art.

The Vedas discouraged idol-worship, and said: "The vulgar look for their gods in water; men of wider knowledge, in celestial bodies; the ignorant in wood, bricks, or stones; but the wisest man, in the Universal Self." This was carried to the extent that esoteric teaching of the Upanishad was not even reduced to writing; it being held to be too holy for script, but could only be conveyed from Soul to Soul and only realized by profound meditation. Their deep-rooted aversion to idolatry found its way in the Buddhist teaching, with the result that the Master's life and teachings had to be conveyed in an iconic symbolism or hieroglyphs, since the Master had expressly forbade "imaginative drawings painted in figures of men and women," but allowed the Bhikkhus to draw and paint "representations of wreaths and creepers and bone-hooks and cupboards."<sup>(1)</sup> Consequently, the attainment of Nirvan was symbolized by the figure of a pipal tree with a throne or altar in front, upon which various emblems are placed for worship: "the Wheel of Law" stood for Dharma: and the stupa commemorated the Founder's Nirvan. As previously observed, it is only after Ashoke's time that resort was had to statuary and Buddhist art then became enriched by the stone-images of Buddha, the Bodhisatva, the Devas, Arhats and men carved with the realism of the popular art.

This will be evident if we describe a stupa, typical of each school. In Ceylon the Stupas, called the dagobas, are bell-shaped, though the most approved form is that of a water-bubble surrounded by three umbrellas,—one of the gods, the second of men,—the third of the final deliverance or Nothingness.<sup>(2)</sup>

(1) *Kulvagga* VI—3, 2.

(2) *Mahavagga*—175, 190, 193.

But elsewhere, the number of umbrellas varies, being 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, or 13; and the gradation of the inverted pyramid suggests divisions of the universe. In certain stupas the brethren see the symbolised representation of Mount Meru. One of the oldest, and in an excellent state of preservation, is the group of stupas which rise high above the Sanchi Plateau. The main stupa is enclosed by an ornamental open stone-railing with four gates, symbolizing at once the four gateways of the Indo-Aryan village, <sup>(1)</sup> while the rails which have three bars were understood to typify the three positions of the sun at its horizon, in the east and the west and in the meridian, as also the Buddha, the Sangh and the Dharma. Sometimes they had four bars to mark the Nativity, the Enlightenment, the First Sermon and the Nirvan of the Founder; while the Brahmans explained them to refer to the four Vedas. The lotus-flower and the lotus-fruit are conspicuous in the Buddhist literature; as indeed, it is in all sacred literature of Egypt and Vedic India.

Within its petals—the Blessed Ones are depicted as dwelling in paradise. The great dome of the stupa represented the sky, while the blue lotus-flower with its inverted petals symbolized the *Hiranya Garbh* or womb of the universe. The group of five columns which rose from the foot of the dome represented the five Jewels,—earth, air, fire, water, and ether. The reliquary which crowned the dome was the relic of the Vedic altar of burnt sacrifice, while the crowning umbrella was the relic of the royal insignia of the race of Kshatriyas. The wheel represented the sun. The arched windows, vaults and domes conveyed the same symbol in another form which later on became represented by a Swastika (卐) or a simple cross (+).

The first object that attracted the notice of man was naturally the Sun, whose diurnal motion through the sky was symbolized by a wheel which at once became the emblem of its disc and one of eternity. The wheel had its other uses. It was the propelling part of a chariot and the primitive sage adopted it as the emblem of motion and progress. In the

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(1) Havell (E. B.) *A Study of Indo-Aryan Civilization*—76.

Hindu mythology the *chakra* (disc) or wheel of Vishnu was prepared by him from the essence of the Sun-god, Surya.<sup>(1)</sup> It had twelve spokes which represented the twelve months or the year, and the twelve signs of the zodiac, and to each spoke there was also assigned a deity.<sup>(2)</sup> The Swastika (卐) is only an abbreviated emblem of the solar wheel tyre, and the movement being indicated by the crampons.<sup>(3)</sup> It was later reduced to a cross by the omission of the crampons which represented the parts of the tyre. The wheel, the Swastika and the cross are thus all the same emblems of the sun, and as such they have from the earliest times been the sacred sign of religious auspices. Later on, it acquired the mystery of all symbolisms and was used as an auspicious sign generally. Thus the universal monarch was described as a Chakravarti, to mean the ruler of the globe whose birth-mark was Vishnu's discus visible in his hand, called—Sudārshan Chakra.<sup>(4)</sup> In the case of Buddha his birth-mark was transferred to the feet as more akin to the wheels of a vehicle;—the *chakra* marks visible on Buddha's soles being taken to mark his destiny either as Chakravarti or the perfect Buddha. In its figurative sense, the wheel became the symbol of the Buddhist universal law, the "Dharmachakra" <sup>(5)</sup> or full Compass of the Law; and Buddha himself had ascribed to it mysterious significance. "The wheels," he said, "are of five kinds, wheels of wood, as in a carriage; circles of gems; the symbolic wheel of Dhamma (righteousness of Law); the four-fold range of postures (standing, walking, sitting, lying); the vehicles of means of success (Sampatti), as for instance, the orbit of a favourable place of residence, the orbit of association with the good, perfect adjustment of one's self, the cycle of merit wrought in the past."<sup>(6)</sup>

The lotus, or the water-lily will be found worked into the designs of the base and capitals of frescoes and columns, pillars, arches, window-dorées, vaulted roofs and all other structural

(1) Santhayan—*Grihya Sutra* 11-4-14, 20 S. B. E. 401; *Antiquities of Orissa* 123.

(2) *Ib.*

(3) Simpson; *Buddhist Prayer Wheel*, 105-106.

(4) "Beautiful wheel," "Auspicious wheel".

(5) Rajendralal Mitra—II *Antiquities of Orissa* 125.

(6) *Digha Niky*—4 S. B. E. 254.

designs, as also in paintings, which have been copied all over in Asia and in Europe. As Mr. Havell remarks: "The romantic spirit which inspired the art of Indian Buddhist builders was the spirit of the Gothic cathedrals, and Gothic art was the gift of Indo-Aryan to their craftsmen in the West. In its pristine splendour the chaplet-house of Karle<sup>(1)</sup> must have been one of the greatest places of worship ever made by the hands of men."

It is easy to follow the journey of the Lotus of the Good Law from India to China, and thence into Korea and Japan: but how the art of Karle and Ajanta passed into Western Asia and thence into Europe, to blossom again in the glorious cathedrals of France, is a fascinating chapter in the world's romance which remains to be written.

#### BUDDHIST MUSIC.

Music is a secular accomplishment, and has always been a powerful proselytizer and all religions know its value as a necessary adjunct to their religious rituals. This is typified by Saraswati, the goddess of learning depicted as seated on a white lotus with a *vina* (lute) in one hand playing it with another, a book in the third and a necklace of pearls in the fourth. The god Shiv is stated to be the founder of the threefold art of music, dancing and singing. Indra's heaven is filled with the music of Gandharvas who are the singers, who are accompanied by Apsaras, the siren dancers, and the Kinnaras the centaur-performers on musical instruments. The Vedic index shows a very wide variety of musical instruments. In the *Pûrak* there is a reference to the two disciples of Gautam Buddha having attended an opera. In the *Mahajanak Jatak* there occurs a reference to the gift of a band of drum, horn, gong and cymbals to certain great personages before whom

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(1) The Buddhist had carved (200 B.C.) or chaplet, house of the Order. The design of this Chaitya-house was followed in Ajanta.  
in the rocks at Karle on the Western Ghats between Bombay and Poona, a Chaitya-house (Lit. "House of Chaitya")

they were played in a chariot. They sounded "like the noise of the sea." It records Brahmdatt's gift of a miraculous drum to a monk, which, if sounded from one side, scared the foe, while, they became his firm friends if it was sounded from the other. A Buddhist drama, *The silapa āisaram* (300 A.D.), enacted in the South, mentions the drum, the flute, the *vina* as well as the *yal*; while there are frequent references to chants and songs, both religious and secular, set to music; but they do not differ from the general Hindu music, and the only conclusion they suggest is that while the Buddhists did not discard music, they did not enrich it by any notable developments of their own.



## CHAPTER XXI.

### BUDDHISM AS THE UNIVERSAL RELIGION.

It is denied that Buddhism is a religion. But whether it is a religion or not depends upon what we understand by that term. It is clear that the term religion is elastic in its import, while even its etymology gives no certain clue to its meaning.<sup>(1)</sup> In its primary sense, however, it implies belief in a supernatural being or beings controlling the universe and entitled to worship and obedience: in other words, it implies the Creator and the duty which His creatures owe to Him—of reverence and dutiful submission to His authority. So considered, religion is limited to the relationship of man to God. But, since all men owe a similar duty, it becomes necessary to observe certain rules of conduct in the relation of man to man. In its strict sense, such relationship belongs to the domain of ethics, as distinct from morality; but the nexus between the two is so close, and by no means illogical, that it has become an integral part of religion.

Such appear to be the true meaning and limits of religion and there is no reason why it should be used in a wider sense. But so it is, and to a certain extent, justifiably so; since the religionist having assumed a dual duty—one towards God and another towards men *inter se*, it becomes obligatory upon him to link the two by asserting that the second is either a command of God or is inspired by and pleasing to Him and that it must be enforced by suitable sanctions which account for the doctrine of reward and punishment and the consequent creation of heaven and hell.

If we take religion in its pristine purity—as limited to the duty of man to God, we are confronted with the difficulty of understanding the terms we use. Take for instance, the term

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(1) Fr. Ety. uncertain—stated to be derived either from L. "*relegare*"—to bind or according to Skeat "*religens*" —fearing the gods opposite to "*negligens*" —negligent; see the subject more fully discussed on pp. 464-466 *ante*.

"God." What do we know of Him and, unless we know something of and about Him, how can we say what duty we owe to Him? In other words, what we wish to know is whether God is a personal God or is merely a dialectical abstraction, whether He is an entity or a mere hypothesis. In short, we wish to be apprised of some of His attributes, and if these attributes do not define our duty towards Him, we wish to know what that duty is. It is upon these two questions that the world is none the wiser since it began.

It is a well-known experience of those who have to have recourse to medical aid that when the qualified surgeon pronounces the case as incurable, the quack appears on the scene and promises to relieve the trouble by his nostrums and patent pills. Such is unfortunately the case in religion. Man finds himself confronted with the wide universe. He naturally wishes to know who made it, or otherwise, how did it come into existence? The universe is a mute *enigma*. It provides him with no solution. But Man must know. His mind is restless: his curiosity insatiable. He cannot rest contented with the unsatisfactory answer that he cannot know. He gives vent to his insatiable curiosity and failing to find any other solution, he finds some solace in the assurances of the knave or the fool, probably the latter, who appears upon the scene and promises to hold the master-key to the great riddle of the universe, or, in order to satisfy his own curiosity or gratify his vanity, passes muster a fable which he passes as inspired or revealed; but, for which he offers no proof other than his own asseveration. The inquirer has no counter-theory of his own. His mind is a blank—of knowledge he has none, and he is consequently fain to accept what he cannot disprove, except by the obvious inference of reason. But human reason is limited, while the universe is unlimited. His mind is even less than a mustard seed to fathom the infinite span of Nature. What is he to do? In his helplessness he accepts what he can get. But what he does get is precious little; for even guesses have their limits; and the vaster the subject, the less scope is there for plausible guesses.

But a truthful man will make no guesses. If he does not know, he will say so. Such was Buddha. He was born in an age when the Brahmanical doctrine of Brahm held the field. As already observed, it did not go beyond the statement that "He exists" <sup>(1)</sup> and that "He is eternal, all-knowing, absolutely self-sufficient, ever-pure, intelligent, and full of pure knowledge and absolute bliss." <sup>(2)</sup> The Christian conception of God was, as has already been seen, <sup>(3)</sup> inherited from the Jews who believed Him to be a super-man, something like a King or the "Pater Familias," with the Jews as His chosen people. "So God created man in his own image." <sup>(4)</sup> But the truth is that the Jews had created God in their own image. And this tradition Jesus adopted and repeated. He did not reveal a single fact about Him, of whom he professed to be the incarnation. The later apostles and saints have added nothing to our knowledge of God. They have merely idealized him as the embodiment of perfection. The Vedantist asserted that He was *Nirgun*, that is without any attributes at all, since attributes are definitive, whereas He is undefinable. The Christian reached the same result by defining His attributes in a cluster of superlatives, both positive and negative. Thus Lessius: "From the fact that God is infinite in His essence, it follows that He Himself is necessarily infinite in every kind of perfection that belongs to Him, namely, the greatness, power, wisdom, holiness, etc. These perfections are in Him by a single and most simple form, which is absolutely infinite and unlimited. For they are not real properties proceeding from the essence, but are the Divine self-subsisting essence itself, and consequently, are a simple form of the Divinity which can be comprehended by us only imperfectly."

"By reason of this simplicity, God is infinitely perfect and more excellent than if He possessed all the perfections in different forms, compounded and united with each other ;

(1) *Katha. Up.* VI—13 ; *Chand. Up.* ;  
Shankar *Prat.* *Up.* 244 ; Anandagiri *Prat.*  
*Up.* 252.

(2) Shankar *V.S.* 25.

(3) See Ch. XVIII *ante*.

(4) *Genesis* I-27 ; cf. *Ib.* I-26.

for it is infinitely more perfect and more excellent and more sublime to possess all perfections by a single form than to possess them by different forms. For these different forms are really limited to their own species. Hence, it follows that they could not constitute the Divinity or be the Deity itself. But that form which in its supreme simplicity contains all perfections, is necessarily limitless and infinite. It is being by itself, *esse*, and consequently is the Divinity itself.”<sup>(1)</sup> But the definition of God by ascribing him positive attributes has its limitations and superlative is itself a relative term and is limited by human comprehension. Consequently, an effort to describe Him by what He is not is held to be more hopeful. So Denis ventures upon a negative definition. He says: “Raising our language higher we say: ‘God is neither soul nor intelligence, He has neither imagination, nor opinion nor reason, nor understanding; He is neither word nor thought, and He can be neither named nor understood, He is neither number nor order, neither greatness nor smallness, neither equality nor inequality, neither similitude nor dissemblance. He is not motionless, not in motion, nor at rest. He has no power, nor is He power or light. He does not live, He is not life, He is neither essence, nor eternity, nor time. There is not perception in Him.

‘He is not science, truth, empiric wisdom; He is neither one, nor divinity nor goodness. He is nothing of what is not, nothing of what is. No being can understand Him as He is, nor does He know any of the things that are as it is. There is to Him neither word nor name nor science; He is neither darkness nor light, neither error nor truth.’ Concerning Him, we must neither make absolute affirmation, nor absolute negation; and by affirming or denying the things that are inferior to Him, we do not thereby affirm or deny Him, because that perfect and unique Cause of beings surpasses all affirmations, and He who is wholly independent and superior to all beings, surpasses all our negations.”<sup>(2)</sup>

(1) Lessius: *The Names of God*.

Pessoin's "*Vedānta Vindicated*" p. 109.

(2) *Mystic Theology* V cited in Rev. J.

St. Thomas Aquinas felt that the definition of God, by a mere assemblage of negations, would hardly carry conviction. So he attempts to formulate an affirmative definition. "I answer," he says "that true affirmative propositions can be formed about God. To prove this we must know that in every true affirmative proposition the predicate and the subject signify the same thing in reality, and signify something else in idea. It is manifest that man and whiteness have the same subject, and differ in idea; for the idea of man is one thing, and whiteness is another. The same applies when I say, Man is an animal; the being 'Man' is truly an animal, for they exist in the same subject (*Supposito*)—both the sensible nature by reason of which he is called animal, and the rational nature by reason of which he is called man; hence this predicate and subject are in the same subject (*Supposito*), but differ in idea.

"To this diversity of idea corresponds the plurality of predicate and subject, while the intellect signifies the identity of thing by the composition itself. God, however, as considered in Himself, is altogether one and simple; still, our intellect knows Him by different conceptions; so, it cannot see Him, as He is in Himself. Nevertheless, although it understands Him under different conceptions, it knows that one and the same simple object corresponds to its conceptions. Therefore, the plurality of predicate and subject represents the plurality of idea, and the intellect represents the unity by composition."—An example of scholastic ratiocination.

God was the subject of anxious inquiry by the Greek philosophers, but they too abandoned the quest with the words, which the wisest of men gave expression to, on the eve of his death: "And now you to live and I to die; but which of us is going to a better land is unknown to every one except the gods."<sup>(1)</sup>

If, therefore, the definition of religion is limited to its primary conception, what have we got? In the light of

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(1) Plato: *Death of Socrates*.

pure reason, we see Him not. We have a vague sense of the presence of an all-pervading power; but whether it is cosmic energy, subject to its own immutable laws, or something beyond, we know not, and probably we shall never know. Such is then the result of Reason. And yet beyond Reason what have we got? There remains then the Faith. Now Faith without reason is as risky as reason without Faith. In the one case, it may lead to the installation of error in the place of truth; in the other case, the truth reached is relative and not absolute. And this is all the distinction between atheism and agnosticism, a distinction which detractors of that religion consciously or unconsciously seem too often to forget.

Buddh knew that so far as regards the knowledge of God, all he could do was to correct the prevailing notions. His contribution to the knowledge of God was, therefore, necessarily negative and iconoclastic, but corrective. He ridiculed the Brahmans who professed to know all about God. He despised their method of reaching Him by immolation. These were the two cardinal tenets of Hinduism and he opposed them both, in a language at once emphatic and clear.

Now as the Hindu concept of Divinity has never been improved upon and as it finds a place in later Christianity, it follows that in so far as Buddh's contribution concerns the main theme of religion, he had purged the human mind of a serious error which he who runs can see, but which continues to be perpetrated and perpetuated by the combined effect of early training and its indoctrination by pious parents and the professional priesthood. It is the faith instilled into the young minds of the pupil by persons in authority and at the most impressionable period of life.

If the League of Nations or some other authority charged with the duty of protecting children were to save them from intellectual corruption by making the Nations to agree that religious instruction into any denominational creed shall be deferred till after they had passed the years of nonage, one or

two generations would suffice to stamp out the pernicious errors of all religions and restore the youth to what is pure and true in them.

This would be an essay to instruct the world in a universal religion. It may be asked where does such a religion exist? That Buddhism is such a religion is admitted even by its opponents. For if we turn from God to Man, the question that has puzzled the philosopher and the religionist alike is—Man, his past, his future and his conduct. These words comprise all that is to be said about the relationship of Man to God and of Man to Man. And it is in this connexion that the religions of the world disclose the widest divergences. These questions raise those which relate to the man's soul, his original sin, his destiny, the questions of salvation and damnation and those of Heaven and Hell.

But as all religions postulate the existence of God, but differ on His form and attributes, so here, though all religions agree in establishing a nexus of man with God through the medium of soul of which the body is said to be only a tabernacle—a temporary abiding place, still they differ upon what it means and comprises,—whether it is something distinct from the body or is merely another name for consciousness, whether it is a reality or a mere longing, and all else that that longing implies. It is upon these human problems that Buddhism has shown marked originality and its founder has concentrated his supreme effort.

We have already seen what Buddhism has got to say on the subject. That may or may not command universal acceptance. But what has commanded universal acceptance, and indeed universal acclamation is its social morality. That remains a unique feature of Buddhistic ethics, and it is the prototype of Christian ethics which has in no way improved upon it. On the other hand, in its adaptation to Jewish theology it has suffered some deterioration. Apart, however, from its local variations, the fact remains that the Buddhist ethics is unapproachably the highest that the mind of man can

conceive and it is this which makes Buddhism the cornerstone of a world-religion.

Believers of dogmatic Christianity, of course, deny that Buddhism is a religion; and there can be no doubt that considered in the light of those that have come to be regarded as the basic foundations of all religions, Buddhism will not stand the test.

For instance, all religions regard belief in a personal God as a cardinal part of their faith. In its pristine purity, Buddhism did not postulate the existence of such God. But while all religions postulate the existence of one God, they do not all admit that that God is the God of all religions. For example, the God of the Jews was Jehovah, but He was only in later years admitted to be the God of the universe. So the worshippers of Allah would indignantly repudiate that their God was the Brahm of the Hindu religion. It would thus seem that while all the religions seem to agree upon one God and that a personal God, they repudiate the suggestion that that God is common to all religions.

Again, while all religions, such as Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam base their creed on Revelation, each claims the revelation as special to its own religion. In other words, every religion asserts its right to paramoury on the ground of its special and exclusive Revelation—a Revelation made by a God who specially favoured that religion and imparted to it a secret which He has withheld from all others.

Buddhism alone never made such a claim. On the other hand, it claims to be the sumtotal of knowledge which has come to us by our own mental processes.

As such, its doctrine is purely ethical and its appeal is made direct to the seat of reason. Consequently, it is a religion in one sense though not in the other. The Christians, who dread its invasion upon their own faith—the super-natural character of which its historical study seriously undermines—have attacked its tenets root and branch, oblivious of the fact that in attacking them they were sapping the foundation



of their own creed. How can Buddhism be a religion, it is argued: "It refused to admit the existence of a personal Creator, or of man's dependence on a higher Power. It denied any eternal soul or ego in man. It acknowledged no external, supernatural revelation. It had no priesthood, no real clergy, no real prayer, no real worship. It had no true idea of sin, or of the need of pardon, and it condemned man to suffer the consequences of his own sinful acts without hope or help from any Saviour or Redeemer, and indeed from any being but himself."<sup>(1)</sup> "It is clear then that tried by such a criterion as this, early Buddhism could not claim to be a religion."<sup>(2)</sup>

The Hindu will say the same. He will argue that Buddhist ran full tilt at all the cherished tenets of his religion, the supremacy of the Brahmans, the infallibility of their scriptures, the worship of idols and the observance of caste and in the special sense in which religion is understood to connote a sectarian dogma, the followers of other religions will join with the Christian and the Hindu in denouncing it as no religion at all.

But this is its especial merit. It embodies the basic truths of all religions, and is free from their superstitious dogmas. It is this which is causing flutter in the orthodox dovecotes. "It is, indeed, one of the strange phenomena of the present day, that even educated people who call themselves Christians are apt to fall into raptures over the precepts of Buddhism, attracted by the bright jewels which its admirers delight in culling out of its moral code, and in displaying ostentatiously, while keeping out of sight all its dark spots, all its trivialities and senseless repetitions, not to speak of all those evidences of deep corruption, beneath a whitened surface, all those in significant precepts and prohibitions in its books of discipline, which indeed no Christian could soil his lips by uttering."<sup>(3)</sup>

(1) M. Williams: *Buddhism* pp. 539, 540.

(2) *Ib.* p. 539.

(3) *Ib.* pp. 541-543.

But the same authority does not deny "that much of the teaching in the sermon on the Mount and in other parts of the Gospel-narrative is based on previously current moral teaching which Buddhism was the first to introduce to the world 500 years before Christ."<sup>(1)</sup> and he admits "that Buddhism conferred many other benefits on the millions inhabiting most populous parts of Asia. It introduced education and culture; it encouraged literature and art; it promoted physical, moral, and intellectual progress up to a certain point; it proclaimed peace, good-will and brotherhood among men; it deprecated war between nation and nation; it avowed sympathy with social liberty and freedom; it gave back much independence to women; it preached purity in thought, word and deed (though only for the accumulation of merit); it taught self-denial without self-torture, it inculcated generosity, charity, tolerance, love, self-sacrifice, and benevolence, even towards the inferior animals; it advocated respect for life and compassion towards all creatures; it forbade avarice and the hoarding of money; and from its declaration that a man's future depended on his present acts and condition, it did good service for a time in preventing stagnation, stimulating exertion, promoting good works of all kinds, and elevating the character of humanity.

"Then again, when it spread to outlying countries, it assumed the character of a religion, it taught the existence of unseen worlds; it permitted the offering of prayers to Maitreya and other supposed personal saviours, it inculcated faith and trust in these celestial beings, which operated as good motives in the hearts of many, while the hope of being born in higher conditions of life, and the desire to acquire merit by reverential acts, led to the development of devotional services, which had much in common with those performed in Christian countries. Nay, it must even be admitted that many Buddhists in the present day are deeply imbued with religious feelings, and in no part of the world are the outward manifestations of religion—such as temples and sacred objects

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(1) M. Williams : *Buddhism* p. 543.

of all kinds—so conspicuous as in modern Buddhistic countries.”<sup>(1)</sup>

The writer then, referring to the fact that Buddhism was a kind of introduction to Christianity, says “that Buddhism has never claimed to be an exclusive system. It has never aimed at taking the place of other religions. On the contrary it tolerates all, and a Buddhist considers that he may be at the same time a Hindu, a Confucianist, a Taoist, a Shintoist, and even strange to say, a Christian.”<sup>(2)</sup>

This is exactly why Buddhism must be classed as a world-religion. It possesses none of the bigotry, nothing of the exclusiveness of the sectarian creeds. It is tolerant of all creeds, but only intolerant of their superstition and absurd dogmas, and offers a faith enlightened by reason, and a convenient formula for uniting all intellectual forces on the ground of a common idealism.

(1) M. Williams: *Buddhism* pp. 551, 552.

(2) *Ib.* p. 552.

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE EPILOGUE.

The rise of Buddhism marks a golden era in the history of the East. That era has long since passed away, never to return; but its spirit is still a land-mark in the history of human civilization and culture and its contribution can never be overrated.

The history of Buddhism is the history of a great world-movement, the full effect of which has not yet been seen. Though, over twenty-five centuries have elapsed since its founder closed his eyes, the freshness and vigour of his teachings have ever grown like the all-spreading banyan tree, under which the great world-mentor taught the first elements of his creed.

Though in India his garlands are withered, his trumpets mute, yet in the world beyond, his voice is the voice of the celestial, his call—the call of the only Saviour to which half the world responds.

A thousand years before his time, a remarkable system of philosophic thought was first conceived by the great seers of India. They held the Universe centred in Brahm—the Supreme Spirit of the Universe. They saw with their mental vision that all that human eyes could see was a mere delusion and that there was no substratum in the world-phenomena. The Brahm created the Universe. The worlds innumerable came into existence, lived their day and died; and this cycle of eternal change followed a concrete shape, eventually only to merge into the Brahm from which they emanated. The Great Universe was, then, nothing more than the sport of Brahm which could not be described otherwise than by the one word “*Asmi*”—“*I AM*”. The Soul of Brahm pervaded all beings which originated from and then merged into Him.

Now since all visible world is impermanent and ever-changing, that change must be subject to the law of causation,

The Brahm was eternal and immutable, the world was transient and human life, of all lives, transitory ; while its happiness and misery, pleasures and pains seemed wholly fortuitous. But behind and beneath its seeming inequalities, there was the backing of the Divine Spirit. How could it, then, be voted as unjust ? The injustice was only apparent, but not real. To the short-sighted vision of the narrow on-looker, the inequalities seemed great and inexplicable. But to the great seers who comprehended the Universe as a whole, this life was only a short flicker which man could see, though it was only a link in the great chain of causation ; it was the product of a concatenation of causes in which the mind and matter presented a visible dualism—the one representing a spark of the Great Soul and the other an obstacle in its passage to its appointed goal. In the great chain of causation, the previous life was the immediate cause of the present, as the present would be that of the next. The actions of man were the determinants of his lives, the vicissitudes of which were formed and shaped by his own deeds : It was the combined law of Karm and re-incarnation.

Logically, then, man was the master of his own destiny. This view gave colour to the entire ethical doctrine of virtue and vice—of good and evil. As a man soweth, so shall he reap.

The pure metaphysics of this ancient creed did not remain long unchallenged or unsullied. It was the simple seed from which grew a vast system of Indian Philosophy. Side by side with the dissenters, there grew up a priestly class who professed to have solved the great riddle of the Universe.

They held, it is true, that the law of Karm was universal, but by no means inexorable. There were means of circumventing it. They were found in the law of devotion to Brahm, of which what better proof was available than that found in sacrifice and penance, self-sacrifice and austerity ? It was a short-cut to salvation. An unwieldy ritual out-grew the philosophic view of cosmogony, the fine fountain of which was polluted by the selfish assumptions of the priest-craft, who became mediators between the man and his Creator. One ritualism led to another, till all life became involved in the en-

compassing thralldom of religion. Society was sub-divided into castes, which was claimed to have been made by divine appointment. When once the mind is enslaved, it is not difficult to imprison the body. Moreover, superstition has possessed special attraction for the proletariat everywhere, and it becomes a fetish when it is allied to ignorance. The priests in India regarded it as a sacrilege that their scriptures should be read by other than the twice-born and practical difficulties interfered with the latter acquiring sufficient literacy to understand them.

The priests had thus the practical monopoly of learning, literacy and knowledge of the unspoken tongue in which their sacred scriptures were written. It would have been expecting too much of any monopolist that he should use his power otherwise than as it was used by the priest-craft. They placed themselves in a class apart—even above the gods. They divided all society into four castes, not including the outcasts who were the aborigines, and society so divided soon became self-centred and narrow, and its members cultivated the spirit of jealousy and spite towards those of the other castes. A religion such as this could not, of course, think of proselytism. It was one in which communalism became the dominant shibboleth. The duties of the various castes to each other and their common subjection to the Brahmans were meticulously set out. They were impressed upon the vulgar with the sanctity of divine ordinance. The entire society was now bound in the fine meshes of ritualism and religion. It had no social obligations and its members were free to prey upon one another, which they did by the Kings levying wars upon their neighbours, and the people amusing themselves by killing, maiming or otherwise disturbing the peace of others, while high-ways were rendered as insecure as those who maintained them.

It was at such time and amongst such people, that Gautam Buddha was born. He had to combat the overweening supremacy of the Brahmans, overcome the organized union of self-interested clericals, maintain the sanctity of the intellect against the parti-

sans of credulity, restore the social order and retrieve it from the rule of tooth and claw, and, if possible, make saints out of such age-long and hardened sinners.

Buddh dealt with three aspects of Brahmanism. He studied their cosmogony, examined their *a priori* method, and was able to pick and choose for himself as much of it as appeared to him to appeal to his inductive reasoning. Gautam's method was throughout inductive, the reverse of the Brahman deliverance. He preached to a people in an age, who put religion above science: his preachings are as fresh to-day, when men have begun to put science above religion. His own line of ratiocination bore the same relation to that of the Brahmans, as the method of Aristotle bore to that of Plato. Both followed the inductive line of reasoning; and both proceeded along the well-beaten track of proved and ascertained facts. As such, turning to the Vedantic theory of the creation, Gautam, while prepared to admit the presence of a Supreme Power, was, still far from conceding the existence of the Supreme Deity.

Nor was he prepared to accede to the teaching that the world was an emanation of that deity and that it was a mere illusion. His own view was that it was impossible to say how far the external world was a reality, and how far a phantom, since our senses furnished no trustworthy criterion of truth; and our mind was unable to act independently of the senses. It is owing to our inability to determine what share these internal and external conditions take in producing the impressions of external world that we cannot absolutely predicate as to the actual state of nature apparent to our senses. Our knowledge being then relative, we cannot predicate anything about the absolute character of Nature. Nevertheless, conceding to our mental infirmity a real existence of visible nature, the one thing presented to our mind is a succession of impermanent forms, and as exhibiting an orderly series of universes, worlds, and beings, arising, growing and disappearing in strict conformity with a primordial law.

As consistent with this law, Buddh accepted the law of Karm and that of re-incarnation. But this doctrine postulated

the existence of the individual soul of which Buddh found no cogent evidence. Nevertheless, since he had to postulate the continuance of a *nerus* to bridge the gulf that divided the two lives, he had, in the end, to work on the hypothesis—as if the soul continued to preserve its individuality, despite the destruction of its body.

But Buddh regarded these questions as secondary and he was not prepared to close with his opponents. He regarded such inquiry as wholly beyond the orbit of human mind, certainly beyond the ordinary human mind.

However, making full use of these current, though unproved, metaphysical dogmas, he reared thereon his grand fabric of ethics, directed against class-privilege and caste-inequalities, while he restored to man the dignity of his reason by decrying the insane sacrifice of lives for the purpose of securing salvation, which, he said, must be earned and cannot be purchased.

He knew that the cumulative human sufferings owed their origin to the promptings of evil desires: he had, therefore, to make men curb and control their predispositions. To enable them to do so, they must acquire the habit of governing their will. By the combined mastery of his desires and will, man could be made to be a helper to his fellow-men. But what should be his ideal? The Brahmans had presented to the devout the bliss and beatitude of Paradise. His own ideal was *Nirvan*—that mental satisfaction and its resultant pleasure which arises from the knowledge that one has done one's duty. The *Nirvan* so attained is conditional and transitory. Its permanency can only be assured by a life well-spent with no craving for future life left in a mind completely emancipated from the feeling of Egoism. Buddh believed, that so long as men were not indoctrinated into that feeling, they would be unable to forego the dominating force of evil desires, apart from which there was no evidence for the existence of an Ego separated from its physical basis.

The eternal *Nirvan* being, then the ultimate aim and goal of life, it was the duty of man to make the most of it and so



obviate the possibility of future births. Human body, like all matter, was a suitable mechanism for the purification of the mind. When it became immaculate from the sordid desires and wants of life, the influence and grip of evil thoughts and evil deeds, when the sage was willing as cheerfully to die as he was willing to live, with no lingering regret that his life was coming to a close, meeting death with a complete self-detachment and with abounding hope of eternity, he had attained Nirvan which would survive the disintegration of death.

Knowledge of two things was needed to assure man of this bliss—the cause of life and its sufferings and the remedy for ending them. These were formulated in the two great principles—the four sacred truths and the middle path. The truths concern the sorrow, and the path, its extinction by right thought and action, which, while avoiding ritualism on the one hand, avoids sensualism on the other.

These are not mere vague admonitions, but have been worked out in great details. The Path is divided into eight sub-heads and is to be completed in four stages in which ten fetters or errors or evils of the mind are to be conquered and removed. The details are technical: but their objective is to make a thorough cleansing of the mind by removing therefrom the delusion of self and bring under control the bodily passions and the desire for self-indulgence.

That the Master's clarion-call for social purity had the desired result, is abundantly clear from the fact that the ethical foundation of his religion has become the basis of another great religion, which shares with Buddhism the distinction of spiritual mentorship of three quarters of the world.

It is also a fact, worthy of note, that even the Hindu conception of cosmogony has materially shaped the world-thought on the subject. It would seem as if the stream of spiritual thought flowed from India to Persia and through that country to Egypt and thence to the smaller nations of Asia Minor, including Palestine, from whence it received a fresh stimulus and

in later years vivified the thought of all thinking Europe. The history of ancient Egypt probably goes back further than the history of any people in the world. According to Draper, traces of the pre-historic, pre-monumental life of Egypt, are still preserved in the relics of its language and the well-known principles of its religion. Of the former, many of the words are referrible to Indo-Germanic roots,—an indication that the country at an early period must have been conquered from its indigenous African possessors by intrusive expeditions from Asia, and this is supported by the remarkable principles of Egyptian religion. The races of central Asia had at a very early time attained to the psychical stage of monotheism. Africa is only now emerging from the basest fetichism; the negro priest is still the sorcerer and rain-maker. The Egyptian religion, as is well known, provided for the vulgar a suitable worship of complex idolatry; but, for those emancipated from superstition, it offered true and even conceptions. The co-existence of these apparent incompatibilities in the same faith seems incapable of any other explanation than that of an amalgamation of two distinct systems, just as occurred again many ages subsequently under Ptolemy Soter.<sup>(1)</sup>

Herodotus describes the Egyptian conception of the Soul as an emanation from a particle of the universal Soul, which in a less degree animates all animals and plants and even inorganic things. They upheld the doctrine of Karm and its consequential transmigrations through even animals for purification.<sup>(2)</sup> Greece which had always looked up to Egypt for its spiritual inspiration appears to have carried it across the sea; and Greece broadcasted it to all nations along the Mediterranean coast, and, further inland, to countries such as Macedonia and Asia Minor and thence to the rest of the civilized world. Of course, the primitive philosophical elements from which we start are examined by each recipient, who shapes them in accordance with his own proclivity, and thus they pass from hand to hand and in course of time become the common heritage of mankind.

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(1) *Intellectual Development of Europe*, —81, 82. (2) *Ib.* 91, 92.

The net result of Buddhism in the East was to enthrone rationalism in place of ritualism and sacerdotal authority. It prepared and popularized a new code of morals, which was as revolutionary of the established order as it was thorough and penetrating in its effect upon every individual life, from that of the king down to that of the peasant. It broke down the dead wall of privilege and superstition and cast abroad the seeds of religious truth, the identity of which is in some cases lost in the variations produced by the soil and atmosphere.

One thing is certain. Buddhism, as such, scarcely made any headway in Europe, though its principles and elaborate rituals have left their impress upon the Western faith. During the six centuries which followed the death of its Founder, several attempts were made to bring the near West under its sway; but Judaism appears to have presented an impenetrable barrier to its outward progress in that direction.

That religion stood committed to a personal God, and religious monarchism as regards His relation to the world. The only people, He had chosen to be His own, were the Jews. Their conception of the Universe was thus one which called for a supreme effort of faith to endorse it; and this was readily supplied by Christianity, the founder of which had come to fulfil the law, not to combat it.

His teachings gave Judaism a wider vogue and, with the enthusiasm born of a neophyte, the principles of the new creed—composite of Judaism, Hellenism and Paganism—obtained a wider currency in which the cardinal doctrine of divine monarchism was transformed into a divine patriarchism and captured the heart of the lay men. The essential features of the first 1,800 years of Christianity may then be summed up to be—(a) Belief in the fatherhood of God; (b) His manifestation in the person of Jesus; and (c) the resurrection and eternal life to those who so believed in Him. The question of human soul was left to be determined by the polemics of religion; but the prevailing doctrine, till the age of Reformation, was one of pure materialism, it being maintained that the soul was simply a second body “a

transparent and lucid figure in the perfect form of a man" <sup>(1)</sup> "The angel in the Last Judgment was constantly represented weighing the souls in a literal balance, while devils clinging to the scales endeavoured to disturb the equilibrium." <sup>(2)</sup> It is only a little before the Reformation that the pantheistic doctrine of an all-pervading spirit, which "sleeps in the stone, dreams in the animal, and wakes in the man," <sup>(3)</sup> brought in its train a purer conception of the soul. But these were the faint rumblings of a gathering storm led by the mystic writings ascribed to Dionysius and Areopagiti and other Christian pantheists, which swept over Europe and destroyed the power of the monarchist theology with its thorough anthropocentricism and unqualified materialism as regards human soul, and its destiny in a material heaven, purgatory or the Inferno. The Reformation was only one phase of the religious renaissance which swept away the crude conceptions of the old dogma and gave to the old words a new meaning in consonance with the altered views of the age.

The ensuing centuries are marked by the growing strength of rationalism, a tendency to rationalize the religion, to reconcile the old with the new, and to associate new images with the old, to refine, purify and spiritualize its dogmas and revise and reform its expressions. "Ecclesiastical power throughout Europe has been everywhere weakened, and weakened in each nation, in proportion to its intellectual progress. If we were to judge the present position of Christianity by the tests of ecclesiastical history, if we were to measure it by the orthodox zeal of the great doctors of the past, we might well look upon its prospects with the deepest despondency and alarm. The spirit of the Fathers has incontestably faded." <sup>(4)</sup> But out of the ashes of the old dogma, there has sprung into existence a system of exalted ethics in which the old bickerings and strife, the old rivalries and jealousies, between one religion and another, will disappear and man settle down to the service of man as the highest *Dhamma*, and the purest virtue as the noblest sacrifice that he can make to insure his happiness in the life that is, and the life to be.

<sup>(1)</sup> Pertunian: *De Anima* Ch. VII; quoted in *Lecky* 340.

<sup>(2)</sup> *Ib.*

<sup>(3)</sup> Schelling.

<sup>(4)</sup> *Lecky*—186.

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